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REGIONAL

Reporter Profiles Israeli Nominee for Ambassador to Egypt

45040156 Paris AL-MUSTAQBAL in Arabic
11 Jun 88 p 24

[Article by Yusuf al-Qa'id: "Israel Nominates Mosad Agent as Ambassador in Cairo"]

[Text] Finally the issue of an Israeli ambassador in Cairo has started moving along, and Israel has proposed the name of a new ambassador to Egypt. In the event that Cairo approves of him, he will become the third Israeli ambassador to Egypt.

Cairo now is in an unenviable position.

On the one hand, it does not want the day to come when the Israeli enemy's ambassador becomes a dean of Egypt's diplomatic corps. Cairo is making several quiet efforts to avoid this acute crisis.

But, on the other hand, when the Israeli Government decided to nominate its new ambassador to Egypt and sent his name, Cairo was taken by surprise—and oh, what a surprise that the nominated ambassador should be Shim'on Shamir!

Shim'on Shamir, whose name is usually preceded by the word "professor", was in Cairo until recently, and was expelled because he was considered persona non grata in Egypt. This is a polite expression that usually means that this person had carried out actions outside the scope of his declared business in this country.

Shim'on Shamir was in Cairo in the capacity of the first Israeli director of the Israeli Academic Center in Cairo. This is the center which was established in Egypt in accordance with one of the addenda to the Camp David agreements, which also specified that, in return, Egypt had the right to establish a scientific center in Tel Aviv. However, in Mubarak's time, Egypt has refused to use that right. As of yet, no Egyptian academic center has been opened in Tel Aviv.

After a period of Shim'on Shamir's work in Cairo, Egyptian authorities noticed that the nature of his interests and relationships was very far from the work of an academic center, and that they bordered on other actions which are most simply described as first class espionage activities in Egypt. Moreover, Egypt was able to find some of his papers which had been sent from Cairo to Tel Aviv. These papers were expected to consist of his ongoing and completed studies at the center. However, upon reading these papers carefully, it was discovered that they consisted of security reports about the situation in Egypt, discussing everything in Egypt from a completely hostile viewpoint.

There were studies on the maladies of malnutrition in the rural Egyptian villages and in working-class districts in the cities, such as mange, emaciation and general fatigue.

But the real worry that beset the Egyptian authorities was about the man's other activities. He began a large movement among the students studying Hebrew at Egyptian universities as part of Eastern languages. He began to organize linguistic studies for them followed by travel grants to Israel.

The movement among the Egyptian youth was a natural introduction to the movement among those sent on scholarships from Islamic and Arab nations to Cairo, where attempts to contact them, offer them services, and tempt them with travel to Israel, were in full progress. Egypt observed a strong concentration by Shamir on none other than African students, particularly those who were on scholarships at the illustrious al-Azhar University. More than one case of this kind was observed.

It is true that the Israeli Academic Center in Cairo whether under Shim'on Shamir or those who came after him, suffers from an almost total boycott by Egyptians, and no one does business with it.

In facing this blockade, Shamir tried to work far away from Cairo, where he found fertile ground for himself in the city of Alexandria, far from the rejection by Cairo. There he was able to find a young storyteller and novelist of average talent and limited potential before he left for Israel, where he spent some time. He returned to Egypt to write a story about his trip which is an insult to all that is Arab, Palestinian, and Islamic. This story got the special attention of the Israeli and American consuls in Alexandria, to the extent that the consul of a great country like America held a party at his home and invited all the writers and intellectuals of Alexandria.

Shim'on Shamir is one of Israel's hawks (despite my personal rejection of the idea of doves in Israel). He is from one of the groups personally connected with Menachem Begin, the worst enemy of Egypt, the Arab nation, and the Palestinian cause in all of Israel.

When Egypt demanded the deportation of Shim'on Shamir from its soil, it was expected that a crisis would occur in the relations between the two countries, or that Israel would in turn demand the deportation of some Egyptian personalities from the Egyptian Embassy in Tel Aviv. But Israel withdrew its Mosad man quietly and without any fuss because it knew more than anyone else the role the man was playing in Egypt. It seems also that it wanted him to return to Egypt, but under a different badge, and under a different title.

The session during which the Israeli Government decided to nominate Shamir to become Israeli ambassador in Cairo was the same session in which it was decided to make changes and transfers in the Mosad

leadership, both inside and outside of Israel, particularly after the assassination of Palestinian leader Abu Jihad, when it was anticipated that there would be upcoming retaliatory operations.

Cairo is currently facing two bitter choices. Should it accept the Mosad man Shim'on Shamir, whose deportation it previously requested, as Israel's ambassador to Egypt, or should it reject this nomination and accept the risk so that the Zionist enemy's ambassador does not become the dean of the diplomatic corps in Egypt?

To date, Egypt has not received the official papers that nominate Shamir to be Israeli ambassador, even though the news had been officially announced in Israel. Since that announcement, Cairo has been giving itself a chance to seriously and unhurriedly consider the matter, in order to reach a sound decision in this delicate matter.

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Haykal Interviewed on Uprising, Regional Issues

44040258 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic
7 Jun 88 p 11

[Interview With Muhammad Hasanayn Haykal in Cairo, date not given]

[Text] Cairo—AL-DUSTUR office—Though preoccupied with preparing the second part of his trilogy on the history of the wars Egypt has waged since the 1952 revolution, prominent journalist Muhammad Hasanayn Haykal thankfully agreed to be interviewed on many of the developments being undergone by the Arab arena and answered all the questions and queries with his familiar frankness.

Because Haykal allowed just one hour for the interview, we had to embark on the dialogue directly in order to exploit every second of the allotted time. Here is the outcome:

In Wake of Abu-Jihad's Martyrdom

[Question] The recent assassination of Palestinian Leader Khalil al-Wazir, alias Abu-Jihad, in the capital of Tunisia perhaps dictates itself as a topic of discussion, especially since it came at a sensitive time and considering that al-Wazir was the mover behind the ongoing uprising in the occupied territories when it was at its peak.

[Answer] There is no doubt that with Abu-Jihad's assassination, the Palestinian cause has lost one of its strongest figures and leaders. This loss will definitely have its strong impact. Our view of this operation must not, of course, stop at bemoaning the loss of a leader of the Palestinian revolution. This view must act as a strong

motive pushing forward the Arab nation generally and the Palestinian people in particular. We must not allow this view to make us stand paralyzed in grief over the death of one of our leaders.

[Question] This means that you do not view Abu-Jihad's assassination as the loss of a certain character?

[Answer] Of course, even though I acknowledge the enormity of the loss. However, the circumstances under which the assassination was carried out and the manner in which the murderers carried out their operation redouble our grief and prevent our thoughts from pausing before one individual. The operation itself and the manner in which it was carried out in an Arab capital are more humiliating to us than previous operations. Our security has become so insignificant and the wall protecting us has been penetrated as never before. Abu-Jihad's assassination has confirmed beyond all doubt and has left us no opportunity to deny that our land, our security and our thought have become fair game to all.

[Question] So what next, now that a Palestinian leader has been assassinated in such a humiliating manner in an Arab capital?

[Answer] I cannot but urge the Arabs to exploit the situation to push the Arab nation forward. We must exploit every situation to serve our interest. It is useless to weep the loss of one of our beloved men. What is beneficial is to employ the circumstances to serve our interest.

Welcome to Accumulations

[Question] How, keeping in mind that the Palestinian uprising, whose dynamo was Abu-Jihad, has completed its sixth month without the support of any Arab regime, excluding some support slogans?

[Answer] Let me tell you this. Don't view the situation purely on its own. The reality consists of a number of entangled or interconnected situations. If you view Abu-Jihad's assassination purely on its own, then you will reach no conclusion. If you view the uprising on its own, you will also reach no conclusion. All these are accumulations and it is wrong to consider them a waste. Peoples, any peoples, move only as a result of accumulations. An assassination may not be enough to stir a people. A refugee camp massacre may not be enough to stir a people. The stone uprising may not be enough to stir a people. But put together, these accumulations are certainly fit to stir this people and the Arab peoples.

[Question] Mr Haykal, don't you agree with us that under the current realities of the Arab nation, the only conclusion one can make is that we are actually living in the era of defeat?

[Answer] Allow me to disagree with you. We are not in a phase of defeat. We are in the post-shock phase, which is the worst moment of our life. We, as Arabs, are now in the truth-seeking state. However, I am still optimistic over the future. Searching for the truth is a sign of life. Isn't this proof that we are a living nation?

[Question] But what would you call the condition of indifference that has afflicted some people and has made them distance themselves from the current Arab causes?

[Answer] It might seem to be indifference if we view matters from a temporary or superficial angle. But, in my opinion, it is wrong to do so. As I have already said, these are accumulations which will inevitably produce an individual who will stir the people. The cause producing such an individual might be weaker than all these causes.

Egypt Is Arab

[Question] But some people's indifference or negativism toward this uprising is the natural outcome of a U.S. scheme in the area?

[Answer] I don't think that any scheme can see success, or at least promise to achieve its objectives, in the Arab area in the future. It suffices that we know who are those who collude with this scheme. This is proven by the fact that certain theories surface from time to time, but only to foil each other. At times we hear talk about the U.S. peace and at others media waves rise to promise peace with Israel. The practical experience has proven that it is impossible for such schemes to succeed.

[Question] But isn't the isolation of Egypt from the Arab nation for such a long time considered a success for this scheme?

[Answer] This particular situation is a proof of the soundness of what I have said. Hasn't Egypt returned to the Arabs, or vice versa? What is important is that they have returned to each other. It is my opinion that Egypt is a near non-entity when absent from the Arab world. At the same time, it is the "motor" for the Arab plan. I must note that Egypt is not sacred at the Arab level and that its true position grows greater when it performs its positive role. This is a fact and this is why the scheme to distance it or isolate it from the Arab nation has failed. Even though such distancing or isolation did occur for a period of time, regardless of how long, it could not continue. Seeking the truth is the weapon with which we can confront any foreign scheme aimed against us as Arabs.

Arab Awakening

[Question] Mr Haykal, you have said that you are optimistic over the near future. Is this a reflection of your view that there are signs of an imminent Arab

awakening, especially since the accumulations you have referred to have grown by a great degree in the latest period of this nation's history?

[Answer] I cannot conceal my optimism which I derive from history. The task of all of us is to stir the historical process which requires waiting. As for awareness, I see its signs spreading in all parts of the Arab nation's entity. Here are those lively peoples who are concerned with their conditions, as evidenced by the fact that they are debating and searching, as I have already noted. As for the waiting, I believe that we will be living in a state of sweeping chaos until the onset of the next century as a result of the entangled plans, the intellectual invasion struggles and the economic domination endeavors. It is a period of explosiveness and ebullience from which I hope we will emerge peacefully.

[Question] What is the way to overcome this period?

[Answer] There is no doubt that we are undergoing a phase of historical development at a time when the world is experiencing failure of numerous policies and plans in both the Marxist and capitalist worlds. Therefore, we must define our future plan not at the local level but with a broader visualization that encompasses the entire world of which we, of course, constitute an indivisible part.

[Question] Can you show us this plan?

[Answer] If I knew it, I would have already revealed it. I can only give you the keys and let you go search for it because it belongs to you. You, the youth, are the future and the real makers of the plan.

[Question] What are the keys, then?

[Answer] The plan can be founded only on the nation and its liberated resources. Moreover, there are constants that cannot be lost. Emphasis must also be put on the need for a profound examination of the general international conditions. In the light of our past experiences, you may define and reach the ideal plan. There is the pan-Arab plan, the independent state plan and the social plan that needs to be reexamined. The Zionist plan is unacceptable. There is also the Islamic plan that has recently projected itself as an alternative. But it is not a complete plan.

[Question] By the way, do you think, in light of the Islamic tide that is sweeping the Arab peoples, that the Islamic plan is the most suitable plan for the future?

[Answer] Sorry. Through the opinions and ideas of those who carry and advocate it, I do not see the Islamic plan as a complete plan.

[Question] You have repeatedly stressed that it is essential not to disregard the international conditions when we view our future. Could you clarify this for us, please?

[Answer] We must first make a distinction between independence and domination, especially since we are caught in a major struggle between the two. Therefore, we must be alert to all forms of domination which no longer mean military occupation. With the amazing scientific and technological development, domination has come to assume numerous forms and shapes. We have come to realize that intellectual and economic domination forcefully controls one and what one does. If, for example, one wants to deal with the advanced method of international transportation, one has to turn to air travel. There is an international air travel movement and it is impossible to operate outside this movement's framework. In the information policy, for another example, we face an enormous number of influential foreign broadcasting stations. Therefore, one does not act in isolation from the world. Consequently, we must develop new methods that are fit for dealing with the others, especially since the entire world is divided into just two parts: Strong and weak, controlled and controlling.

Preoccupied With Others

[Question] Don't you think that the Arab-Egyptian rapprochement in this particular time will only increase the inter-Arab conflicts? We have heard that after 'Abd-al-Nasir's death, Egypt's role turned from one of leadership to a role of joining one of the warring Arab camps.

[Answer] When we speak of the Arabs, we must not make a distinction between Egypt and the others. We all live in a state of misery and nobody can criticize or task anybody else. Yes, there were positions of which we dreamt and we continue to dream. But these positions are now vacant. In the 1960's, for example, there was a pan-Arab plan, there were well-known tendencies and there were common criteria. But who can hold the criteria of right and wrong now? Therefore, say Egypt has returned to the Arabs or the Arabs have returned to Egypt. They are all words said in the open air.

[Question] Don't you think that the two superpowers have played a role in Egypt's return to the Arab fold?

[Answer] Let me tell you with utter frankness that we are now facing a unique historical moment in which the possibility of free movement is available. Each of the two superpowers is experiencing its own crisis. One is suffering with its balance of payments and the other is rearranging its house internally. Therefore, neither has an objection to a nation's [or country's] interaction with itself. All are faced with interactions and nobody is trying to control the temperature of these interactions. What is needed is that we possess the true will to exploit this moment.

[Question] This means that the two superpowers are too preoccupied for the Middle East issue?

[Answer] If you examine the true nature of the Arab-Israeli conflict you would find that it is a real human tragedy. Had this tragedy occurred in its present form 25 years ago, the world would have moved to end it. Consider the Iraq-Iran war. It is an extremely dangerous war taking place next to the Soviet Union. Yet, both superpowers have rejected the idea of a ban on weapon exports [to the area].

Seed and Plant

[Question] How do you then interpret the latest movements of Shultz, the U.S. secretary of state, in the area?

[Answer] To be utterly frank, Shultz's movements have come as a result of the insistence of the U.S. Jewish community which has been disturbed by the transformations developing in Israel's image in the United States in the wake of the Palestinian stone revolution in the occupied territories. Therefore, these are movements intended to confront the flood of stones. Else, where was Shultz when the Arab appeals, all of which failed to move him, were made? If this is the seed, then what plant will it produce? I am the one asking.

[Question] So there is no alternative to the international conference to settle the Middle East problem?

[Answer] I don't believe in the international conference. Whenever I read something about it, I get sort of upset for one reason, namely that any measure must produce specific results. Therefore, any international conference can only reflect the balances of power on the ground. Are we confident that these balances will be in our interest? I believe that the outcome of such a conference will be worse than we imagine.

Iraq-Iran War

[Question] Let us turn to the Iraq-Iran war, considering that you predicted that it will last 20 years as soon as it broke out. What is your testimony?

[Answer] The Iraq-Iran war is one of the real problems facing the Arab nation because it is, in fact, an Arab-Persian civilizational struggle that does not stop at the limit of just Iraq. All the contradiction, that this struggle harbors could have been turned from antagonistic contradictions into mere contradictions or into controllable antagonistic contradictions. But with the outbreak of the war, Iranian nationalism awakened at a time when the Arab position of support for Iraq lacked depth and sincerity, not to mention the Islamic revolution and the dazzlement with its leader. All this means that the war will go on. But let us all understand that if Iraq is defeated, then this means that the Arab nation's eastern security flank will be penetrated.

[Question] Talking of Iraq, whose nuclear reactor was destroyed by Israeli hands, is it alone to blame for the continuation of this war?

[Answer] There are numerous parties.

[Question] The Soviet Union, for example?

[Answer] There are numerous parties.

[Question] Arab?

[Answer] At the end of 1981, I visited four Arab capitals within a period of just 2 weeks. Commenting on the war, the leader of one of those capitals cited an Arab verse which says:

"Snakes may die of the poison of scorpions." I conveyed the words to President Saddam Husayn, but declined to reveal the name of the leader, when the president's friendly talk about this capital angered me.

[Question] What about the nuclear reactor? Doesn't it have a role in the Arabs' self-defense?

[Answer] A nuclear reactor is for posing a threat only. I don't think that anybody can use it. However, it is a challenge and the strength of countries is measured by the dimensions of the threat they pose. Therefore, the Arab countries must collectively seek a nuclear deterrent because such a deterrent exceeds the capability of any [Arab] country independently.

[Question] Finally, Mr Haykal, are you optimistic over the democracy Egypt is experiencing?

[Answer] Let me ask: First, when does democracy materialize? It materializes in a certain society that has been able to reach, with all its classes, the phase of preserving its freedom, even if by force. Democracy does not materialize just because people believe in it, meaning that the democracy that is reflected as ability in the parliament and total disability outside it is no true democracy.

[Question] To conclude, is there a difference between the Haykal of the 1960's and the Haykal of the 1980's?

[Answer] Yes, a difference of 20 years.

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PALESTINIAN AFFAIRS

Palestinian Groups Active in Lebanon Discuss Developments

44040267a Kuwait AL-WATAN 9, 10 Jun 88

[Article: "AL-WATAN Talks with the Leaders of the Palestinian Forces in Lebanon"]

[9 Jun 88, p 16]

[Text] The arena of Palestinian action in Lebanon seems replete with events that are essentially related to the surrounding developments in the Arab and international worlds and sometimes are a reflection of them.

AL-WATAN met with the officials of the Palestinian forces in Lebanon and had these conversations with them. The first meeting was with the media official of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine, Suhayl al-Natur, and this interview took place with him:

[Question] Why have the internal skirmishes in the camps resumed? Will the new agreement last?

[Answer] The central followup committee, composed of members of the seven [as published] Palestinian organizations—the DFLP, the PFLP, al-Sa'iqah, the General Command, the Popular Struggle Front and Fatah—the Revolutionary Council, held a number of meetings and on 21 May 1988 reached an eight-point agreement stipulating the following:

1. Commitment in toto to the cease fire. The committee will openly give notice of anyone violating it.
2. The security force will take its positions between the two belligerent parties.
3. The people detained by the two sides will be released.
4. The positions controlled by the seven forces will be given up.
5. The mobilizations and newly-created positions will be withdrawn and manifestations of arms will be ended, concurrently with the surrender of the positions to the forces.
6. The seven forces will commit themselves to giving up positions after the suitable circumstances for that are provided.
7. These resolutions will be considered binding on the two parties after they are signed and the seven forces will commit themselves to a clear stand concerning any party obstructing the execution of these resolutions.
8. Any liquidation of a detained person will be considered a violation of these resolutions and the committee will be bound to adopt the necessary measures.

This was followed by approval and signing by the parties and the practical initiation of application. However, the Fatah movement, Temporary Command, after application of the cease fire, deployment of the separation force and release of the detained persons, who were more than 90 in number, was slow in withdrawing the arms and mobilizations which it had brought in from abroad and it took its positions around the Shatila and Burj al-Barajinah camps. After it had begun the application it did not complete it, relying on the relatively positive atmosphere created by the application of the first points, for which we expect success in stabilization of the agreement.

[Question] How do you view the conjunction between what has gone on in the camps and the continuation of the uprising?

[Answer] We have repeatedly declared our position in principle clearly and constantly. The Democratic Front calls for reliance on democratic dialogue as a means for remedying all problems and differences which occur among the members of the united ranks and the unified cause, and we advocate the condemnation of all forms of internecine fighting and all recourse to arms, because they are harmful to our cause.

What has happened in the Beirut camps has harmed our people's heroic uprising in the occupied territories, which has gone on beyond its sixth month and is on the threshold of comprehensive civil rebellion. The fighting has also led to destruction and human and material losses. The resistance of the Palestinian camps in Lebanon has constituted one of the elements from which the masses of the uprising have derived their inspiration in unleashing their devastating powers and it has hastened the inflammation of the spark of the uprising. The uprising at the same time has also had a positive effect on us in Lebanon. Fighting has disappeared from the camps irrevocably, the process of rectifying Palestinian-Syrian relations has started and the status of the Palestine Liberation Organization has risen, as well as the launching of efforts to round out its unity through the enrollment of the forces which had not joined the national union congress in Algiers.

The recent skirmishes between the two parties to Fatah have harmed all this and have damaged the role and relationships of the Palestinian revolution. Efforts must be directed toward supporting, consolidating and escalating the uprising and striving through every means to move the powers of the Palestinian people in Lebanon in a unified way in all forms of support for this uprising, not internecine killing and slaughter.

[Question] Why the internal disputes, with the reconciliation between the Palestine Liberation Organization and Syria? What explanation do you give why the skirmishes came before the Arab summit conference?

[Answer] The reason for the internal disputes is not the relationship between the Palestine Liberation Organization and Syria. If a reconciliation has occurred between them, why then do the disputes remain? I believe that this is a severe simplification of the matter. Disputes among the ranks of a people and revolution are of the nature of things, and people who dream of a pure revolution are living in a blessed illusion. The basis, as we have already pointed out, is that the unification of ranks to fight the Zionist enemy requires the remedy of disputes by democratic means, not by the search for judgment through arms.

In addition, Arab relations greatly affect our Palestinian revolution and Palestinian-Syrian relations play an important, serious role in this area, whether they are oriented in the positive or negative sense, and work themselves out within the ranks of the Palestine revolution, as was clearly apparent with the Fatah movement schism in 1983 and what followed it. However, it is necessary to admit that this treatment is not everything, and not all the reasons for the internal disputes lie just between the organization and Syria. Rather, to the contrary, such a reconciliation is considered a positive factor encouraging the alleviation of the severity of the internal struggles and a motive for the restoration of comprehensiveness to Palestinian national unity, which began in the national union congress in Algeria in 1987 with the enrollment of the forces which had stayed away because of the political and organizational programs the congress approved.

[Question] What are the bases for regulating the relations among the forces in your view?

[Answer] Our modern Palestine revolution is going through the stage of national liberation from Zionist settler colonialism. Therefore, it contains the broadest classes and groups of the people because of their interest in ridding themselves of this loathesome occupation. In this sense, the disputes and contradictions among the various groups of the people will not disappear, but they will be mobilized in behalf of the basic contradiction against the enemy; therefore the forces and parties are an expression of various interests but at the same time are brought together by a unified program founded basically on the legitimate rights of returning, self-determination and establishment of the independent country, which they will not give up.

In order to carry out this political program, which all the forces have agreed over, it is necessary to rely on national unity on certain bases, among them freedom of belief and thought, that is, every Palestinian's right to belong to the force which he considers appropriate for expressing his national and democratic interests, and also the democratic nature of the relationship among organizations, without compulsion or internal fighting, and their freedom of political and organizational expression. On that basis, we consider that the Liberation Organization is the framework of a front which can accommodate everyone, regardless of their political differences.

[Question] How do you view the regulation of Lebanese-Palestinian relations?

[Answer] In spite of our repeated appeal to the brothers in the Lebanese national forces to open the file on Lebanese-Palestinian national relations, nothing new of this sort has happened yet, unfortunately. A rich experience could be extended to Lebanese territory, the first unique experience of its kind—I mean the coexistence of two Arab liberation movements on a single territory. The high point of such a relationship was in the period which

preceded 1982 with all its richness and continued with the resistance by the Palestine revolution and the Lebanese national movement to the Israeli invasion in the summer of 1982, and the experience of their common confrontation following the extension of the occupation from the south to the mountains and Beirut. An intelligent person cannot deny that errors have marred this great journey, and it is necessary to pause before this experience, evaluate it and set out the appropriate solutions to enable the two parties intensively to coordinate in the face of it in order to rise above problems.

[Question] Do you anticipate that the aggression will continue and get to the point of a new invasion of Lebanon?

[Answer] We do not believe that the current circumstances prompt us to anticipate an Israeli invasion. The Israeli enemy is experiencing a severe dilemma because of the increasing uprising by our people on the inside and the two-headed government in Tel Aviv is facing intense contradictions which are focussed in different views of the propounded solutions to the Palestine question. The experience of the Israeli invasion of Lebanon has also proved that it cannot work in imposing the Zionist will on the Lebanese and Palestinian peoples.

The Zionist enemy's most obvious tendency is to inflict limited military blows against the Palestinian and Lebanese resistance personnel's positions, as happened in the latest period in Maydun, the apple area, 'Ayn al-Hilwah and so forth. These are just desperate attempts to show Israeli military power and terrorize the uprising and the Palestinian and Lebanese people.

Embarking on a Suspicious War

AL-WATAN held the following conversation with the commander of the al-Karamah forces of the Fatah movement and Burj al-Barajinah, our brother Sultan, who said:

[Question] Why have the internal skirmishes in the camps resumed? Will the new agreement last?

[Answer] The skirmishes in the Palestinian camps have resumed because of a number of facts, the most important of which are:

A. What has been going on in the occupied nation for 6 straight months has a relationship to the outbreak of skirmishes. This is the real revolution and it has been labelled a "spontaneous uprising" in their words and by their masters. Here it has been going on 6 months and has been continuing with momentum and self-sacrifice. This uprising appears clearly and obviously, through the support, statements, pictures and information the demonstrators have been raising every day, renewing the pledge to the organization and the independent Palestinian country, to have come out of the womb of the Liberation Organization and its spiritual father, Yasir

'Arafat. The uprising affirmed its allegiance to Fatah on the day of self-sacrifice, the day of the martyrdom of a symbol and idea of the uprising, the martyred commander Abu Jihad.

B. The Palestinian delegation's visit to Damascus and the summit meeting between Abu 'Ammar and the Syrian president, Hafiz al-Asad. These people consider that this meeting has been taking place at their expense and at the expense of their position and relationship with Syria.

C. The Palestinian-Palestinian dialogue which began in Libya and a final important portion of which was completed in Damascus, to strengthen and deepen the organization's unity on the basis of the Palestine charter and the resolutions of the national congresses.

D. The refusal to permit these people to join in the context of the organization as a force in the name of Fatah or any other force which has emerged from this movement's leadership, and the assignment of this decision to the national congress, so that it may decide their membership as an organization or as independent influential persons in accordance with law.

These four elements principally drove the secessionists to embark on skirmishes in an early manner on the brink of the Arab summit, so they could say "We are a figure on the Palestinian stage" and a "seat" would have to be taken for them at the table of the Palestinian-Palestinian discussions and also those with Syria. The situation will continue to be explosive from time to time, until the conclusion of the next Arab summit.

[Question] How do you view the conjunction between what has gone on in the camps and the continuation of the uprising?

[Answer] Someone who lacks something cannot give it, they have no connection with what is going on in the occupied territory and the talk about their dispute with Fatah has proved null and void, because armed struggle is a sole means for liberation and all that is left to them is the slogan of it. Where do they stand with regard to the armed struggle they are propounding? Fatah embodies the slogan of armed struggle, in heroic operations from Metulla-Kafr Shimona to Rafah and the nuclear reactor in Dimona. In the Arab and international contexts, the uprising has affirmed the womb from which it emerged. I am not broadcasting a secret or spreading anything about, that the decision for touching off the uprising was taken before the Amman summit and just a month after the unionist congress in Algiers. The timing of the uprising and the launching of it last 8 December were a response to some Arabs' attempts to rally around a monopoly of Palestinian representation, whose objective and goal were therefore to abort the uprising and contain it, divert public opinion from what was going on there to these battles and mention these hirelings on the radio stations, while the statement of their attributes had

assumed its latest formulation. I can say with the frankness of fighting men that the purpose behind these people's sabotage of the Palestinian theater from within was to revive them from certain death, and they hastened toward this death out of fear of the continuation of their torture. The calculations of their field were not in keeping with those of their threshing-floor, because their gamble on the participation of Arab parties in the event fighting broke out was not in its proper place. In spite of that, and notwithstanding the embargo of Fatah by all fronts and bodies, it brought about their expulsion from within the camps within an hour because they fought the masses of the camps, who all are the rank and file of Fatah and the organization.

[Question] What are the bases for regulating relations among the forces of the organization?

[Answer] The organization's charter, all its national councils' resolutions, the organization's basic constants and their development in a manner serving the Palestinian people's national interests in the light of each stage, in order to bring about the return, self-determination and the establishment of the independent Palestinian country, whose capital is Jerusalem.

[Question] How do you view the regulation of the Palestinian-Lebanese relationship?

[Answer] We must benefit from the pre-1982 stage with its negative and positive features.

Also providing support and backing to the Lebanese national forces in standing up to the plan for factional cantons, standing up to it because the attainment of this plan will bring about the loss of Palestine with itself. The heartland of these factional cantons fighting among themselves with all their affiliations and currents will not be in an Arab capital; rather the heartland and source of reference for the command of these cantons will be Tel Aviv, because that is the Zionist dream, to see Lebanon as tribes and creeds fighting among themselves so that their heartland will be Tel Aviv only.

[Question] Do you anticipate a new Israeli invasion of Lebanon? What is the way for standing up to such an invasion?

[Answer] If it happens and the Lebanese arena, with all its political and military forces, has not been controlled, the armed struggle stops, the effort at fighting among Palestinian forces at times and with the forces that are connected in the Lebanese sense to security arrangements second of all continues, the possible alliance between the Palestine revolution and the Lebanese national forces is struck at and American plans make some progress and the local commitments, why the invasion? If these four basic things are violated, and in a major way, invasion is a possibility, but there are contingencies to it. The enemy will continue during this stage with advance preventive strikes aimed at the

Palestinians and Lebanese together until the coming presidential elections, which will determine the course of the Lebanese crisis through a person, who is the next president and his interaction with the Lebanese situation and its Arab environment.

The Popular Struggle Front

AL-WATAN held the following conversation with the secretary of the region of Lebanon and member of the central committee of the Popular Struggle Front, Abu Khalid al-Shamal:

[Question] What have the skirmishes in the camps come to? Will the new agreement last?

[Answer] With respect to the agreement, that is a local agreement which was approved at a joint meeting of the Palestine revolution and the Lebanese national movement. We were not able to carry this agreement out after we reached it in spite of the urgent efforts we made jointly with the Lebanese brothers. In spite of urging from all friends, we have not been able to agree on a mechanism for carrying this agreement out. All of us have written to the central commanders in Damascus, asking them to intervene to stop the state of destruction of our camps which is resulting from the continuation of this internal fighting, and the central commanders in Damascus actually held a meeting in the headquarters of the national congress in the presence of all secretary-generals of the seven forces, in addition to the presence of the former national congress chairman, our brother Khalid al-Fahum and 'Abd-al-Muhsin Abu Mayzar.

At this meeting a mutual conviction was reached by everyone that what was going on in our camps was the destruction of everyone and a blow at the credibility of the Palestine revolution vis-a-vis our masses on the inside and outside as far as two basic issues went: first the creation of means to guarantee support for our people's uprising inside the occupied territories to ensure its continuation and conversion to a people's revolution and second the realization of a national forming of ranks, that is, the unity of the forces of the Palestine revolution, within the context of the Liberation Organization. That is the basic goal of the masses of our people in the places where they are situated, since our optimism regarding the step taken along the road to Palestinian-Syrian reconciliation is great.

Therefore this command embraced the formation of a central command committee which would supervise the execution of the agreement. After this committee got to Beirut, it held a series of meetings with the local Palestinian commanders in the camps and with the Lebanese national movement in which it arrived at a mechanism for action which enjoyed the approval of all, including the two parties in conflict with one another, which sent their agreement in writing, signed by their primary responsible figures.

Our evaluation is that the base on which this agreement was founded is the need for everyone to coexist within the context of the front, and this means the return by our comrades in Fatah—The Uprising to their former positions within the camps.

[Question] How do you view the conjunction between what went on in the camps and the continuation of the uprising?

[Answer] There is no doubt that our experience as national forces and as Palestinian people in our uprising within the occupied territories is the optimum form for the unity of our people within the framework of the organization, our Palestinian people's sole legitimate representative. This is the form which has guaranteed the continuation of the uprising in an escalating manner in confrontation with the Zionist enemy.

We had hoped that everyone would settle for this modest experience of our people on the inside and its application to our organizational personnel within our camps on the outside. In fact, in a period, in particular after the visit of the organization's delegation to Syria, everyone became convinced of the need to open democratic dialogue among the various forces in order to arrive at national unity within the framework of the organization, which initiated a part of these conversations in Damascus, Libya and Algeria. In the wake of these, a united committee was formed to support the uprising on the inside and this committee achieved progress in terms of providing material and moral resources of support for the uprising within an agreed-upon program.

[Question] What are the bases for regulating relations among the Palestinian forces?

[Answer] The political framework for all of us is the Palestine Liberation Organization, and all the foundations over which we have come together are those which emerged from our national congresses up to the 13th session; everyone agreed upon these. At this time, we are following up on the dialogue and requesting everyone to take part in it and prevent the violation by any party whatever of the foundation, which is the organization's charter, which has rallied all the forces of the revolution around the organization.

There has been progress in this matter in the direction of reducing some of the obstacles facing us all, and our Soviet comrades and the nationalist Arab countries have contributed to that. We believe that if we carry out these steps we will hold our new national congress, through which we will achieve Palestinian national unity in a complete form through the advent of five Palestinian forces which have remained outside the framework of the Palestine national congress, the PFLP, General Command, Popular Struggle Front, al-Sa'iqa, Fatah—the Revolutionary Council and Fatah—the Uprising.

We will also carry out an important step which we consider necessary for firming up our Palestinian situation, which is the rectification of the Palestinian-Syrian relationship by confronting the enemy's camp and through mutual respect.

[Question] How do you view the regulation of the Lebanese-Palestinian relationship?

[Answer] If we achieve our national unity within the framework of the organization and restore the Palestinian-Syrian relationship to its former form, that will be reflected on our relationship with the parties of the Lebanese national movement for which we harbor full respect and esteem for standing alongside us in defending the revolution and the people. We consider it an urgent necessity that we and the comrades in the Lebanese national movement should come up with the formula for regulating our relations with them in order to provide adequate strength to confront what is being planned for Lebanon and Palestine by the Zionist enemy and his agents in the form of the separatist fascist forces in Lebanon. This will facilitate, for all of us, the process of achieving the revival of the trinity of Palestinian-Lebanese-Syrian perseverance, which will guarantee the thwarting of the conspiracies of various kinds.

The Communist Workers

The secretary of the Lebanon organization of the Palestinian Communist Workers' Party, 'Adnan Musa, answered AL-WATAN's questions in the following manner:

[Question] Why have the internal skirmishes in the camps resumed? Will the new agreement last?

[Answer] These skirmishes occurred in conjunction with the turning of a new leaf in Palestinian-Syrian relations. With the meeting between the Syrian president, Hafiz al-Asad, and our brother Abu 'Ammar, the chairman of the Palestine Liberation Organization's executive committee, and the series of conversations which the Syrian capital has witnessed, it has become clear that the file on Palestinian-Syrian relations has been opened in a broader manner and that a group of important results in the domestic Palestinian context and the Lebanese and Arab context will be produced from this course.

It has become clear that there are parties which have been hurt by this new shift. With the formation of the committee of national dialogue to open discussions with the parties to the Palestinian Salvation Front the Fatah secessionists have taken a negative stand and boycotted the ongoing dialogue. In the framework of the positive climate arising from the reconciliation, the ranks of the secessionists have witnessed extensive internal collapse in the Syrian and Lebanese contexts.

The fabrication of internal skirmishes is an attempt on the part of the secessionists to defend their final positions by the methods of violence they have followed as a policy toward everyone who held a dialogue between them and the other forces.

It is a final attempt to hold together and continue in the framework of the internal manifestations of collapse which have followed the Palestinian-Syrian reconciliation. Of course it is no secret that there are Arab parties which are trying to benefit from this climate to raise the issue of the security of the camps and to exert pressure on the PLO on the eve of the Arab summit.

[Question] How do you view the conjunction between what has gone on in the camps and the continuation of the uprising?

[Answer] The secessionists' recourse to the fabrication of internal fighting at this time specifically directly harms our people's glorious struggle in the occupied territories. At a time when national unity ought to be consolidated and ranks should be tightened, as an obvious initial crystallization of a position of support and solidarity with the glorious people's uprising, the Fatah secessionists have resorted to fabricating these struggles, failing to note the glorious struggle our people are presenting and failing to note the precious sacrifices that are being offered every day in the turmoil of heroic resistance to the occupation.

By this method, they are proceeding from the narrowest factional interests and narrow selfishness and are placing these interests above our people's higher national interests—this although the leaf of internal dialogue among the forces that have enrolled under the banner of the organization and the forces of the Salvation Front has been turned, following the meeting of Palestinian-Syrian reconciliation.

[Question] How do you view the regulation of Lebanese-Palestinian relations after the reconciliation with Syria?

[Answer] There is no doubt that the Syrian-Palestinian reconciliation will have its important repercussions on the organization's conditions in Lebanon, including the organization's relations with the official and nationalist Lebanese parties.

The Syrian-Palestinian dispute and its negative repercussions in Lebanon were among the most important factors in the weakening of Palestinian-Lebanese relations and the weakening of joint Palestinian-Lebanese action in the face of the reactionary American-Israeli scheme in Lebanon.

[Question] Do you expect a new Israeli invasion of Lebanon? What are the means for standing up to such an invasion?

[Answer] The reasons which make increased Israeli aggressive military acts and activities in Lebanon likely have increased.

The continuation of the uprising means the deepening of the Israeli internal predicament and, in the framework of the homogeneous stand in the Israeli coalition government with its two segments, that of the Likud and the Maarakh, over the position of not retreating even partially before the uprising, the approach of gambling on the use of force will continue. At the same time an attempt will also be sustained to shift the struggle from its actual theater in the occupied territories to the outside. Therefore, the escalation of Israeli aggression against Lebanon is one form for resolving the internal Israeli dilemma in the framework of the continuation of the uprising. The added new factor is the likely repercussions of the Syrian-Palestinian reconciliation. The Israeli enemy realizes that the most important theater for influencing this reconciliation is Lebanon, that is, the development of common Palestinian-Lebanese-Syrian action against Israel. Therefore we have observed an increasing development in operations of Israeli aggression against southern Lebanon and the Palestinian camps since the reconciliation meetings in Damascus. Opening a stage of escalation of Israeli military aggression in Lebanon requires joint Palestinian-Lebanese-Syrian coordination on all levels, political, organizational and military. This is not a temporary, momentary task but rather a long-range one which requires coordination by alliance in a firm, constant manner, laying a basis for the development of the domestic confrontation and resolution of the problems arising from it. It is a joint national responsibility in every sense of the word.

[10 Jun 88 p 11]

[Text] The scene of Palestinian action in Lebanon is interacting with the surrounding developments in the Arab and international contexts and turning into a reflection of them on many occasions.

Proceeding from this interconnected relationship between Palestinian action in Lebanon and the events on the outside, AL-WATAN has held a comprehensive political poll with the Palestinian forces in Lebanon to clarify their positions and views regarding a number of issues of extreme importance on the Palestinian and Arab stage.

Fatah—Revolutionary Council

In the framework of AL-WATAN's meetings with the Palestinian forces in Lebanon, AL-WATAN held the following dialogue with Walid Khalid, member of the central committee in the Fatah—Revolutionary Council movement.

[Question] Where have the skirmishes of the war in the camps got? In light of the developments that have occurred, will the new agreement succeed in keeping them from resuming?

[Answer] Since 1985, our people in the camps on the Lebanese stage, especially in Shatila and Burj al-Barajinah, have been living through a dark, dirty war which was launched against them under various watchwords and titles. So far, they are still experiencing the destructive effects which arose as a result of this war, which has ended in practice. Throughout the stage of the war which was launched against these camps, plans for internecine fighting were presented sometimes in an obvious form and sometimes between the lines, because the hostile scheme, which failed to harm the camps' resistance, has tried constantly to subjugate the camps from within by fabricating a group of problems leading to the infighting.

We in the Fatah—Revolutionary Council movement were the first ones to raise the slogan of no to internecine fighting and the slogan of unification to confront the dangers, out of our faith that the plans for internecine fighting were part of the imperialist-Zionist scheme which had our national cause and the Palestinian fighting man as its target, in order to make it easy to pass this scheme through.

We have been anxious to give concrete form to our slogans and we have been the ones who have constantly taken the initiative to remove the dynamite fuses which often were spread about.

A number of problems have arisen among the forces of the Palestine resistance, but these problems have not developed into internecine warfare, because we with our comrades and brothers in the resistance forces have worked to contain and remedy them.

A month ago renewed infighting broke out among brothers in Fatah—the Uprising and Fatah—Executive Committee. We started working, and still are working, in a concentrated manner, alongside the other forces, to confine this infighting, deal with its implications and prevent its repetition and renewed outbreak.

[Question] How do you view the conjunction between what has gone on in the camps and the continuation of the uprising?

[Answer] This internecine fighting is not isolated from the other overall developments Palestine and the Lebanese stage are going through now. All the American and Zionist movements and the regimes connected to them are turning toward the basis of undermining and annihilating the people's revolution in Palestine, since the Zionist enemy has the illusion that he will be able to do that in a short period of time, through his use of all the means of repression and terror in the form of collective and individual killing, arrests, banishment of nationalists and almost daily acts of aggression against our

Palestinian-Lebanese people in the south or in the al-Biq'a'. However, the continuation and escalation of the people's revolution in Palestine are all again bringing up the fate and the future of the Zionist entity once more. This is all happening in conjunction with the Palestinian infighting and it has its obvious significance. Therefore we again stress the need to stop this infighting and not to permit its further repetition. Protection of the people's revolution and protection of the fighting man are the central task which everyone must work toward. It is very clear that Israel is seeking to devise a new invasion along the lines of the 1982 invasion in Lebanon.

[Question] What do you hope from the emergency Arab summit conference?

[Answer] The agenda of Algeria's invitation consisted of one point, supporting and protecting the people's revolution in the occupied territories. Now some countries which are gambling on the Shultz initiative and the American movements in the region are trying to add points to the agenda which will dilute this cause and turn it into a peripheral issue at the summit conference, so that the summit will be diverted to producing a resolution to deal with the American initiative aimed at liquidation.

Therefore Shultz is anxious to return to the area before the holding of the Arab summit conference and therefore the Zionist enemy and his instruments are also anxious to undermine the revolution or at a minimum totally black out the people's revolution in Palestine so that his instruments will be furnished with an opportunity, far removed from the pressure of the people's revolution, to stifle it.

As we condemn and indict any Palestinian party which seeks internecine fighting, and our position is clear in defending our people's camps vis-a-vis any party, we renew the appeal to our fraternal fighting men in the Fatah movement, wherever their positions might be, for the unity of the movement, because we realize that the unity of our movement, on the basis of its premises, goals and principles, constitutes the proper approach for getting out of the overall predicament of Palestinian national action.

The PFLP

Raji Abu Fadi, official of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine in Beirut, said:

[Question] Where have the skirmishes of the war in the camps got? Why hasn't the new agreement been put into effect?

[Answer] We had hoped that these skirmishes among brothers in arms would not occur on the Palestinian national arena and we have condemned this bloody course of resolving contradictions, but what has happened will, if it lasts, constitute suicide for the revolution

and the cause. We have exerted efforts with all groups to stop the deterioration, control the situation and end the ramifications of events, and, thanks to everyone's cooperation, we have arrived at an agreement and the two parties have agreed to it. This agreement calls for a cease fire, the strengthening of the security force, its deployment between the two parties, the release of the persons being held in their presence, the withdrawal of mobilized forces, elimination of military manifestations, the termination of the points that have been newly created and the surrender to the security force of the positions that are controlled. The climate has been positive and the intentions have been good. The important thing is application in actual conditions. We stress that the two parties have asserted to us adherence to the principle of democratic dialogue in resolving contradictions on the national stage and they have asserted their rejection of a search for settlement through arms and the language of violence. Of necessity, we must evaluate what has happened and set out bases on which we can rely to prevent the future repetition of what has happened.

[Question] How do you view the conjunction between what has gone on and the continuation of the uprising?

[Answer] There is no doubt that what has happened has affected the state of our masses inside the occupied territory morally and politically, but what has happened has certainly not obstructed the continuation of the uprising. What has happened has diverted the attention of public opinion in the domestic, Arab and international areas from what is happening in the occupied territories and the continuation of the skirmishes undoubtedly harms the uprising, harms our masses and is deleterious to our people's sacrifices within the occupied territories. Therefore it has been natural that we should hasten to stop the state of infighting and urge everyone to furnish the conditions for the continuation of the uprising in the occupied territories.

[Question] Why the internal disputes, after the reconciliation between the Liberation Organization and Syria?

[Answer] There are intra-Palestinian political differences and there are Palestinian-Syrian and Arab political differences. The important thing is that we advance the results of the visit of the organization's delegation to Damascus under the chairmanship of Yasir 'Arafat and the meeting with the Syrian president, Hafiz al-Asad, and Syrian officials. Our assessment is that the door has been opened to the organization and there is an opportunity to strengthen the relationship and agree to consolidate sound political bases on which the Palestinian-Syrian relationship can prosper. The factors which led to the termination of the Syrian-Palestinian dispute are very many. It is true that the martyrdom of the commander Abu Jihad has hastened the opening of the Syrian door, but there are more major factors, the most important of which is the American-Zionist reactionary onslaught aimed at the perseverance and steadfastness forces, the most prominent of which are Syria, the

organization and the Lebanese national forces. There is no doubt that strengthening the relationship among the three parties will strengthen the perseverance and steadfastness front to confront the onslaught through this trinity. I believe that a delegation of organization leaders will reach Damascus soon to advance the relationship with Syria and agree to a common card which will be laid out in the name of the Liberation Organization and Syria at the Arab summit conference. This affirms that the severity of the dispute has declined. There are differences on a group of points, the most prominent of which is the issue of the relationship with Egypt. We call for the need to decide this point and rely on the resolutions of the Algiers conference at the executive session.

[Question] What do you anticipate from the Algiers emergency summit?

[Answer] We want the Algiers summit to be the summit for supporting the uprising of the occupied territories and the conference of the organization's main presence.

[Question] What are the bases for the regulation of relations among the Palestinian forces in your view?

[Answer] The organization charter is clear to all and we do not want to formulate new bases for the presence of forces in the framework of the organization. The political and organizational bases are clear to all, and we rely on them in the context of front-oriented action and in the context of the organization.

[Question] How do you view the regulation of Palestinian-Lebanese relations in the current circumstance?

[Answer] We do not want to talk about the resumption of the relationship or the strengthening of the relationship. We want to stress the importance of developing combative relations between the Palestine revolution and the Lebanese national movement. We are prepared to establish a single Palestine revolution and national movement. The previous pre-1982 experience is full of positive lessons and they include some negative features. There are errors which we must spell out and set out in their natural magnitude and jointly study the nature of the common relationship and its application at the present time. We are committing ourselves to this framework in the program of the national movement on the Lebanese stage and our presence on this stage is a temporary one for us. The Palestinian fighting man is at the disposal of the national movement and is a fighting man participating in the Lebanese national resistance front in confronting the Zionist enemy and his allies. We are prepared to commit ourselves to the movement's orientation as far as the political, military, security, social and cultural Palestinian national presence on Lebanese territory is concerned.

[Question] Do you expect a new Israeli invasion of Lebanon? What are the means for standing up to such an invasion?

[Answer] The statements by the Zionist war minister and the prime minister are wholly clear. They assert that there will be an invasion of southern Lebanon and that this invasion might be of the magnitude of the 1982 invasion or close to it.

All the Zionist leaders have asserted that there will be an invasion of southern Lebanon. The invasions are called temporary. The invasion of Maydun and al-Luwayzah is a prelude for a great invasion of the south.

Therefore what is required, quickly, is the strengthening of the Palestinian situation and coordination of the situation among all the forces inside and outside the framework of the organization. The most important of these is strengthening relations and coordinating the position with the national forces, the need to have a joint operations room in preparation for confronting the worst possibilities, and the need, also, to coordinate the situation with Syria since the attack or invasion will be aimed at the Palestinian-Syrian-Lebanese national existence and it is necessary to mobilize the material resources for confronting the next attack.

[Question] The uprising—where to, and until when, in your view?

[Answer] The uprising in the occupied territories is going on and the unified national command's communiques assert that. The 16th and 17th communiques stress that the uprising is proceeding in heightening strides in the direction of the completion of the civil insurrection. The uprising that has been going on so far has realized very important achievements, among the most prominent of which are that it has established a new national command and a political command which reject bargaining, refuse to deal with the Zionist enemy and insist on adhering to the Palestinian people's legitimate rights and on asserting that the organization is the people's sole legitimate representative.

Fatah—The Uprising

Abu Fadi Hammad, the Beirut region secretary of Fatah—The Uprising, spoke to AL-WATAN in the following conversation:

[Question] Why have the internal skirmishes in the camps resumed?

[Answer] It is sad that these incidents are being fabricated in the context of the growth in the occupied nation's uprising, and also that this internecine fighting is taking place in the camps of Lebanon, specifically in the camps of Beirut, which suffered greatly in the course of the years before 1982. Following the stage of the Palestine resistance's departure from Lebanon, these incidents were fabricated against our positions and our fighting men, and we were and continued to be in a position of self-defense. We are not embarrassed by that because we do not want to fight among ourselves.

Ours are the positions which were betrayed. They were not military in the absolute sense but rather were in the middle of the camp. We are offering everything that is necessary and we are cooperating with the national forces, with the Lebanese nationalist parties and with the inhabitants to restore things to the way they were before the events.

Since we carried out our uprising, some problems occurred and we have been facing them by democratic means, with the national forces. We do not want to deal with our contradiction and our dispute with Fatah in a different way now.

[Question] Is the agreement putting a final limit to the skirmishes?

[Answer] As of this moment, the ramifications of the skirmishes and the fighting in the al-Burj and Shatila camps have not ended. There has been some slow progress in carrying out the agreement, but what is desired is more seriousness in treating what has happened.

Responsible, comprehensive treatment is necessary, because what has happened in the camp goes beyond its geographic boundaries; it has a local, regional and international dimension.

[Question] Isn't the conjunction of the skirmishes affecting the escalation of the uprising?

[Answer] There is no doubt that the people's uprising in the occupied nation is a prominent historic event, but in these circumstances through which our Palestinian arena and the Arab arena have been passing the outburst of the uprising has been an important thing.

The forces which want to continue and are committed to the program of armed combat see in the uprising of the occupied nation a strengthening and affirmation of their platform, and there is a possibility for the continuation of struggle now that 40 years have elapsed.

[Question] How do you explain that the skirmishes have occurred in advance of the Algiers summit conference?

[Answer] If there are debts owing on the Lebanese stage, there also are debts owing on the Palestinian and Arab stage, because some people want the title of the summit conference to be the uprising but the substance of it the smashing of the uprising.

Therefore, we point out that the conference will witness severe struggles, fraternal Syria will have a basic role in this conference by ratifying this conference's resolutions in favor of supporting the uprising in the occupied territory and its title will be the failure to yield to the conditions of the American secretary George Shultz in a manner which is in harmony with the strategic balance.

[Question] What is the manner for regulating Lebanese-Palestinian relations?

[Answer] Following the filthy war of the camps, or the conspiracy, we wanted the right of political action among our masses, the right of work to earn bread, the right of movement and the pursuit of armed struggle, as long as there is an occupation in the south and an occupation in Palestine, on condition that this struggle or conflict not be in contradiction with the strategy of the people in the Lebanese resistance.

However, before we talk first of all about the Palestinian-Lebanese relationship, we must talk first of all about the inter-Lebanese relationship. Have the Lebanese nationalists reached agreement among themselves? How do they view the struggle against the enemy? How do they envision democratic Arab Lebanon?

[Question] Do you expect a new Israeli invasion of Lebanon? What are the means for standing up to such an invasion?

[Answer] Frankly, we state that the Palestinian and Lebanese nationalists are in an unenviable situation because the internecine fighting that is going on is preparation for an invasion which need not in terms of detail be along the lines of 1982, but is connected to the growth of the uprising of the occupied nation, since the mechanism of the imperialist Zionist entity is now incapable of striking at the uprising in the occupied nation.

Therefore, to affirm this entity's credibility, in its imperialistic respect, outside geographic Palestine, it is necessary that it make a strike outside Palestine and the basic arena that is slated in the context of the debts that are owing and are to be collected is the Lebanese arena.

The best means for confronting the possibility of invasion is the struggle of a people's war, the guerrilla war we propounded when we were an opposition nationalist current in 1982, because the occupation army, which has very great capability, can be confronted only by the means of people's war and guerrilla combat.

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EGYPT

Financial Experts Discuss Free Money Market Impact

45040147 London AL-HAWADITH in Arabic
13 May 88 pp 46-47

[Article by Amir al-Zahhar: "The Race Heightens Between the Egyptian Pound and the Dollar"]

[Excerpts] The Egyptian Ministry of the Economy has issued a decision to complete the third of four stages to create a free banking market for foreign exchange. Prices

set by the new legal market are now the basis for all foreign trade transactions with the exception of five basic commodities important to those with limited incomes. The central bank finances these commodities—flour, wheat, cooking oil, sugar, and tea—in addition to cement, insecticides, and foreign debt service.

By this decision, the Egyptian pound takes a long step on the way to unifying its rate of exchange with free currencies, especially the American dollar in which the overwhelming majority of Egyptian trade is denominated.

The multiplicity of pound exchange rates caused similar multiplicity in the prices of most foods and consumer goods and created an illegal market, speculation in Egyptian currency, and disturbances in the accounts of economic activities and operations, thus helping to confuse production, inflame prices, and greatly escalate inflation rates.

Will the terrifying race between the Egyptian pound on one hand and the dollar and free currencies on the other now end? What impact will unifying and floating the pound's rate of exchange have on the economy, production, and prices in general?

AL-HAWADITH posed those questions to a group of bankers, economists, officials, and businessmen, receiving the following answers:

'Ali Najm, former governor of the central bank and now president of Union des Banques Arabes et Francaises (UBAF) says: "Measures to create a free banking market have been gradually implemented since May 1987 when a floating exchange rate, realistic to a large extent, came into being for the first time. It was initially based on the then-available unofficial rate of 216 piastres to the dollar. This rate is currently 225 piastres but the central bank rate for basic commodities remains at 70 piastres to the dollar. The scope of banking market applications has continued to broaden until the recent decision was issued to implement the third of four stages. All foreign trade operations by either the private or public sector have come to be carried out at free market rates. The exception is foreign debt service and the aforementioned five commodities. It goes without saying that they were excepted for societal reasons and will be dealt with in the last stage."

'Ali Najm says that this proves that a unified realistic and adjustable exchange rate leads to relative market stability. Actually, since the banking market was created, the dollar has increased in value by only about nine piastres. This compares to large jumps when multiple exchange rates were in effect.

The trend toward unifying and freeing the free exchange rate is a positive one with numerous benefits. It was not reasonable that a single commodity have more than one price if imported from more than one country, such as

wheat from Europe, Australia, and America. Furthermore, multiple prices do not provide the accurate data necessary for economic operations. It is difficult to prepare a summary account for commercial operations whose prices are not set on one basis. The same commodity could involve operations based on dollar values of 70 piastres, 84 piastres, 135 piastres, and 225 piastres, in addition to the fact that there are special rates for customs.

Among the positives of unifying the rate is the achievement of domestic and foreign market balances. This helps to promote production and define Egypt's needs and what it should produce and export.

The negative effects of unifying the current exchange rates, in the opinion of the former central bank governor, are evident in the continued imbalance in production rates and economic performance, and the lack of incentive and equal competition among the economic sectors of the state, some of which are favored over others.

These negatives become more evident under conditions in Egypt, which depend on imports to a large extent. In this case, inflation rates are lower for foreign currencies than for domestic currency. Consequently, the people cling to foreign currency, not exchanging it for Egyptian currency. This leads to further depressing of the pound and boosting of commodity prices, because no administrative decisions can stop it, and this shows the danger in exchange rates.

To remedy these negative effects, 'Ali Najm thinks it necessary to lessen dependence on foreign countries and therefore reduce the huge demand for foreign currency. At the same time, the number of foreign currency sources should be increased by promoting commodity exports and services. This depends basically on an increase in production and providing substitutes for imported commodities.

Dr Samir Tubar, chairman of the ruling NDP's committee on economics and finance, says that multiple exchange rates disturb economic controls and give certain groups economic advantage at the expense of others. If the public sector were allowed a cheaper exchange rate, private investment would be discouraged because of high cost. A real unitary exchange rate would ensure equality among all producers, attract foreign investment, and encourage expatriates to remit their savings via legitimate channels. The result is an increase in foreign exchange inflows, higher productivity, and decreased imports, which would relieve the pressure on the pound and on the prices of goods in general. The simultaneous implementation of other economic reform measures would surely decrease budgetary and current account deficits.

Dr. Tubar says that such measures may in the short term cause a rise in prices but would certainly lead to increased supply, lessened dependence on foreign goods,

and more purchasing power for the Egyptian pound. He drew an analogy with a patient that needs to be vaccinated against a certain disease. At first, his temperature rises and he suffers some side effects, but then he recoups and acquires immunity, perhaps for life.

Dr. Tubar says that the party and the government are studying ways to relieve this temporary effect of rising prices in order to lighten the burden on people with fixed incomes. Under consideration are specific measures to improve and raise incomes by offering allowances and incentives and linking wages to productivity and to prices.

Dr. Hassan 'Abbas, former minister of economy and president of the Arab International Banking Corporation, says that it is understood that a unitary exchange rate would have the positive impact of sound economic operations, increased remittances, etc. and the negative impact of rising prices, etc. However, the government should focus on the following important points:

1. Improve the utilization of the state's cache of foreign exchange. Resources must be accurately surveyed, then more carefully disbursed for necessary imports. Along with a free exchange market, an adequate reserve fund is supposed to be maintained to make up for any foreign exchange shortages at any time of year.
2. Imports should be considerably rationalized.
3. Idle elements of the Egyptian economy should be employed and utilized, be they equipment and production lines, productivity requirements, or even finished goods that could provide considerable import substitution.
4. Production costs should be reduced in order to attract more foreign investment, increase productivity, and encourage exports and bolster their ability to compete.

Dr. Ahmad al-Safti, professor at the College of Economics and Political Science and chairman of NDP's committee on wages and prices, holds a radically different opinion.

He says that extra care should be used in standardizing the exchange rate because of two reasons:

1. The price of currency differs from any other because of its major impact on the pricing of all goods and services;
2. Standardizing the price of any goods or service is prerequisite to production and consumption rationalization and to ensuring the efficiency of material utilization and reducing waste and idle inventory at all stages.

The peculiarities of the Egyptian economy put forth an important question: what direction should a unitary rate of exchange take—higher or lower?

Standardizing the rates at a high level—that is towards a cheaper domestic currency and more expensive foreign exchange—would have several positive consequences such as promoting exports, attracting foreign investment and tourism, increasing production and job opportunities, etc. But such results can only be achieved under conditions of flexible production. The Egyptian economy is going through a difficult stage and is unfortunately saddled with production that is not sufficiently flexible and with lack of sensitivity in both the supply of and demand for foreign exchange. The truth is, the sensitivity factors of both Egyptian imports and exports add up to less than one (estimated at 0.85 percent). This simply means that a decrease in the value of the pound vis-a-vis the dollar would not improve the balance of payments. Rather, it would result in a frightening race towards more devaluation.

Dr. al-Safti says that this inevitability, because of the critical condition of the Egyptian economy, has made it more difficult to control inflation which is now self-sustaining and continues on its own momentum. To put it even more simply, an increase in prices would reduce the purchasing power of the pound and therefore its value vis-a-vis foreign currencies. This in return would cause an increase in production costs because of the large presence of the foreign component in Egyptian industry. The consequence is another rise in inflation and prices as we enter a vicious cycle of national currency weakness.

Moreover, an increase in dollar price would mean a rise in the Egyptian pound value of any dollar holdings. People would therefore prefer to retain them as currency and as retainers of value. Increased demand for the dollar would additionally crowd the pound as currency in circulation and as a means of exchange. In the final analysis, this would mean an increase in the nation's currency in circulation, which would mean more inflation and higher prices. This brings to light a hidden fact. These factors would cause prices to rise at a rate higher than that at which the pound loses value. Care should therefore be exercised not to use traditional methods to combat inflation and price increases without carefully considering the circumstances and elements of the economy, production, and society in Egypt.

The sound solution, in Dr. al-Safti's opinion, is to implement policies for a unitary rate of exchange that would set a higher—rather than lower—value for the pound. We should never forget that human resources are the basis and the most important motivator for all productivity. Motivating this element to its full potential should be the first step towards such a solution. At first, we need to work towards equilibrium between prices and wages. Without it we will not be able to fully utilize the human resource in production; productivity rates will remain at their current lows; resources and capabilities will continue to be wasted; and people will continue to seek alternative means to raise incomes, be they legitimate or illegitimate. The vicious circle will continue and

so will that incredible perpetual race between inflation, increased production costs, and falling productivity and quality.

The second step towards a sound solution, according to Dr. al-Safti, is to draw up a serious plan for foreign trade, based on rationalizing the utilization of and influencing the demand on foreign exchange within the resources available to us. This would ultimately lead to equilibrium at lower prices. The third step would be to increase investment efficiency and lower costs to investors, especially in the area of illegitimate and unexpected expenses. This would also help to reduce costs and prices and raise incomes.

Dr. Hana' Khayr-al-Din, professor at the College of Economics and Political Science and manager of the Center for Economic Studies at Cairo University, believes that a unitary exchange rate and a legitimate banking market for foreign exchange would benefit the Egyptian economy in such ways as equality among productive sectors (private, public, and combinations). It would even inhibit preferential treatment to various units within the same sector. Certain public sector entities were forced to deal in the unofficial market at prices much higher than those available to others. Devaluing the pound and standardizing its rate of exchange would also tend to reduce unnecessary imports.

A relative rise in the cost of living is anticipated as a negative effect of implementing a unitary exchange rate, but this is really no problem for the well-off and for tradespeople who may automatically and freely raise their fees. Employees, laborers, and those on fixed incomes will be the categories really hurt by this, and the state may have to properly compensate them either by direct subsidy or by raising salaries, wages, and pensions.

Dr. Hana' Khayr-al-Din prefers that the pound not be freely floated when its exchange rate is finally standardized, because the Egyptian economy is presently unable to adapt to such a step. We must only continue to free the exchange rate but in a controlled fashion, especially in light of this economy's lack of sufficient flexibility.

Engineer Mustafa 'Abd-al-Salam, a businessman, believes that free currencies and especially the dollar have been, and still are, a big problems for the Egyptian private sector. Prior to the exchange market, jumps in the price of the dollar played havoc with investment and business accounts. Now that the market has been created, the problem is that not enough dollars are available. Banks are working to meet investment and private sector needs, but this requires standing in line for several weeks. Meanwhile, import credits and deals would most probably change. This makes plans and arrangements for private sector activity even more difficult. What we need is a truly free exchange market capable of arranging for foreign exchange with the same ease it accepts remittances. This is necessary to prevent the return of the black market.

Engineer 'Abd-~~al~~-Salam says that several investment and private sector projects are currently being re-evaluated because of difficulty in obtaining foreign exchange. The solution to this problem, even though not in the immediate and direct interests of the private sector, is to limit imports by any possible means. But then again, this would require the removal of a variety of other domestic obstacles to the private sector, such as administrative procedures, the availability of utilities and services, etc. This is especially so now that the private sector has proven that it is productive in all endeavors.

He added, "In order for the exchange market to accomplish its objective, it must continue to be developed and the Egyptian pound must be completely unfettered. Accounts should be opened in Egyptian pounds which must also be denominated for all operations. This is where the market should meet all foreign exchange needs, including the exchange needed by ordinary individuals for travel, etc. This would reduce the demand for dollars outside the legitimate market."

The pound must also be strengthened by creating international demand for it. This can be accomplished by denominating it for Suez Canal fees, tourist remittances, or Egyptian oil exports, and would ultimately lead to strengthening the pound and reduce the cost of living to the Egyptian citizen.

12945

Observer Discusses Camp David Vis-a-vis Political Freedom

45040161B London AL-DUSTUR in Arabic
27 May 88 p 5

[Unsigned editorial in "Observatory" column]

[Excerpt] In Egypt, there is a tendency to establish a multi-party system as the basis for general political life. The current party law forbids the establishment of parties which oppose the Egyptian-Israeli settlement agreement. Thus, the Camp David accords has served as an axiom which does not allow constitutional or political debate. The Egyptian legal mind could not accept this situation. Many reservations continue to recur in Egyptian minds concerning the immunity given to Camp David. One of these reservations stems from questions surrounding the validity of the referendum held on 20 April 1979 regarding the agreement. There is the conviction that the results of the referendum did not express true Egyptian public opinion in relation to the Zionist entity. This conviction is currently being frankly affirmed by the majority of the political forces which oppose the Camp David agreement, because they consider it an encroachment on Egypt's sovereignty and its leadership role in the Arab world. This gradually growing trend views the agreement as a rejected inheritance from Sadat; it is eagerly waiting for President Mubarak to take steps to distance Egypt from the agreement and its effects.

Another reservation arises in comparing the Israeli and Egyptian positions on the agreement. In Israel, there is a pervasive current opposed to the Camp David agreement. It includes prominent personalities such as Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir, and Minister [without portfolio] Moshe Arens as well as political organizations, such as several parties in the Likud block and the Tehiya Party. Moreover, it is possible to say that the entire ruling Zionist establishment reneged on the application of the agreement when it refused to grant self-rule to the Palestinians. How is it that the president of the Egyptian government has the right to oppose the Camp David agreement, but the Egyptian Nasirist Party, for example, does not have the right to oppose it?

Finally, last but not least, there is a reservation that is attributable to a constitutional point. Axioms are usually a basis on which society progresses. They become part of the backbone of its structure. This description does not apply to the Camp David agreement, because the state has entered into accords with foreign parties, and then reneged on these accords without its structure being rocked or toppled. Thus, the same Wafd Party that concluded the 1936 accord abrogated it after international and foreign circumstances changed in 1952.

These considerations constitute sufficient grounds for the Supreme Constitutional Court in Egypt to rule that the Parties Law, which prohibits opposition to the Camp David agreement, is an illegal clause.

In Egypt, Tunisia, and other Arab countries, there are healthy attempts to discover axioms. The manifestation of these axioms is necessary when their goal is to protect Arab societies from chaos and bloody, foolhardy undertakings. However, the ruler, or a legislative body, can err in distinguishing between political parties and powers which behave in a violent way, and those which pursue democracy, persuasion, dialogue, voter appeal. If the former are precluded from becoming an organized body, and the latter are encouraged to organize, it would be difficult to justify preventing a party or group or other large group from advocating Arab unity, as long as it accepts honest competition with others, does not conceal injustice from society and institutions, and uses ways and methods established by law. In this way, such a party or group will have the confidence of the citizens, and will not threaten the ruler.

13286

Islamic Publication Criticizes Public Opinion Regarding Egypt's Revolution

45040163a Cairo AL-MUKHTAR AL-ISLAMI in Arabic 1 Apr 88 pp 10-12

[Article by Dr Muhammad Yahya: "Shedding Light On Egypt's Revolution"]

[Text] In connection with this issue, we would like to say that all of Islam agrees that pursuing the scattered remnants of Mosad and the agents of Israeli and American intelligence is a noble, patriotic goal. However, in

order to ensure the country's security, this pursuit must extend to members of other intelligence agencies which are no less harmful than these two, such as Soviet and Western European intelligence. It is a shame that the Egyptian agencies which have been charged with this mission (i.e. counter-intelligence) have fallen down in their duties and have neglected them in order to devote themselves to chasing Muslims—for example, discharging army personnel who pray. This noble goal must not be transformed into a propaganda tool for that false group, the so-called Nasirists. It must not become a way of polishing up Khalid 'Abd-al-Nasir's star, drumming up sympathy and support for him, and making him into a patriotic leader, as that group has tried to do by exploiting the relationship between the leader of "Egypt's Revolution" and Khalid and taking advantage of the rumors about the alleged Nasirism of that organization's leader. In our opinion, this organization is not an outgrowth of patriotic tendencies, and, what is worse, its orientation is not Islamic. It is an excrescence which claims to be patriotic. If this is true, this organization is not Nasirist at all. In our opinion, it is a crude, blatant propaganda campaign launched by this false group in order to win popularity and press their claims to being connected with this organization, something which is inconsistent with its original motives.

Since it is agreed that chasing down Jewish intelligence is a patriotic goal, this goal must be universalized in the form of wide-spread popular resistance to such influences. We must be wary of the large numbers of tourists coming from the Zionist entity, for they include Mosad agents, drug smugglers, AIDS carriers, counterfeiters, spreaders of decay and corruption, proponents of laxity and collaboration with the enemy, and spies penetrating the country to seek out its secrets and recruit Egyptians as their agents.

Here let us look at a notion circulated, either ignorantly or maliciously, by some people who think that they are defending "Egypt's Revolution"—the notion that it shoots only at non-Egyptians. Some false propagandists who claim to love "Egypt's Revolution" have used this idea to disparage the Islamic groups which are struggling in the vanguard of Islamic action, whom they tacitly accuse of shooting at Egyptians (al-Sadat, the ministers of torture, Mukarram Ahmad). Therefore, they say, these groups deserve to be described as traitorous and unpatriotic, as compared to the patriotism and heroism of "Egypt's Revolution." Such machinations can be expected of the false propagandists, whose involvement in the "Egypt's Revolution" case has been motivated by a desire to serve their own interests and political reputation, by covering up their and the government's laxity towards Israel and defaming the ongoing Islamic holy war. In this context, it should be pointed out that ever since the time of Butrus Pasha Ghali, Egyptian traitors have always been the targets of the patriotic Islamic movement, because treason and espionage by Egyptians for the colonialist powers, either by opening up the country to Zionism or colonialists (American or Soviet),

or by working with them, aiding them, collaborating with them, and keeping quiet about what they are up to, has always been far more dangerous than what any Israeli Mosad agent could do. For example, executing al-Sadat was a hundred times more effective than assassinating any Zionist agent; in fact, it enabled the Nasirists themselves to return to the political arena and occupy high positions in the government. We must not allow the issue to degenerate into a boasting match in which each side claims to have achieved more than the other. The false ones usually pollute anything they get involved in with their propaganda.

Apropos of this same issue, we were quite upset by the remark attributed to the leader of "Egypt's Revolution," to the effect that the so-called Albert Atrakche, the Jew who was executed, had gouged out the eyes of 149 Egyptian prisoners during the Ramadan war. This news, which was published in AL-WAFD, passed without any comment or follow-up, either from officials or from those friends who profess sympathy for "Egypt's Revolution." This is extremely serious, because it clearly shows that the Egyptian authorities were asleep when they allowed a Zionist to work as a diplomat at the Jewish embassy in Egypt without investigating him or what he did to the Egyptians themselves during the war. This bestial crime (gouging out the eyes of scores of Egyptians) took place without anyone's knowledge, and the criminal ended up strolling around the streets of Cairo in the company of the enemies of all of Islam. There is nothing strange about this, for these are the same streets down which the wanton tourist in search of a brothel, the drug smuggler, the Baha'i, and even the apostate walks.

There is another point to be made about "Egypt's Revolution," which pertains to the way the opposition press has covered the various aspects of the case. These papers have taken it upon themselves to defend the suspects of all the charges, including the charge of violating the honor and morals of the country itself. These same papers failed to take up the defense in several other cases connected with the Islamic tendency (videos, and the attacks on the ministers of torture), in which the official papers were disgracefully defamatory and misleading and reversed all the facts. This conduct by some of the opposition papers has aroused some astonishment as to the actual stands taken by the Islamic tendency. While these papers have extravagantly denied charges that members of "Egypt's Revolution" had engaged in drug use or other immoral behavior, in a remarkably insistent, arbitrary, and even inconsistent manner, they have at the same time shut their eyes to the obvious innocence, moral purity, and noble intentions in the torture ministers case [as published], for example, and the martyrdom of the first defendant in that case. This bias in itself raises questions. Once again, this attitude has not served "Egypt's Revolution," because the propaganda has been so exaggerated. There may even be some dubious, secret, undeclared objectives behind the scenes, especially since those same opposition papers

have mentioned some connections between senior government officials and the case. These are just passing observations. There is still a lot in the pipeline whose time has not yet come.

8559

New Book Highlights Egypt's Revolution Organization

[Editorial Report] Paris AL-MUSTAQBAL in Arabic on 2 Jul 88 devotes pp 46-47 to a 2000-word review by Yusuf al-Qa'id of 'Abdallah Imam's new book "Egypt's Revolution".

The review states that the book is an expose of events that have happened since the late Jamal 'Abd-al-Nasir was in power and that it reveals the existence of a type of vendetta between Israel and the 'Abd-al-Nasir family. It says that the book tries to answer many unresolved questions, and among them two main ones: Did the Mosad play a role in Jamal 'Abd-al-Nasir's death, and did the Mosad try to kill his son Khalid before he could get involved in the Egypt's Revolution organization?

The book which, according to this article, has still not been allowed on the market in Egypt, is published by Sinai Publishing House. Sinai has published fifteen books since it was established in 1985, half of which deal with the Arab-Israeli conflict. Some are: "The October War", "The Trial of Pharaoh", which deals with the trial of President al-Sadat's assailant Khalid Islambuli, "Immigration to Violence", which deals with religious extremism since the 1967 defeat, "The Assassination of a President", and "Sulayman Khatir: Peace, Mosad, Death."

Al-Qa'id sees the book as trying to reveal Israeli intelligence's desire to corrupt and destroy Egyptian society. It details many attempts by the Mosad on Jamal 'Abd-al-Nasir's life and links them to a historical hatred between Israel and 'Abd-al-Nasir. It also alleges that the Mosad attempted to kill Khalid 'Abd-al-Nasir.

The book glorifies the Egypt's Revolution organization and finds in it an expression of the Egyptian people's will in recognizing the Israelis and the Americans as Egypt's enemies, and in calling for the abolition of their corrupting influence.

Economists Discuss Effects of Liberalization of Service Sector on Economy

45040158a Cairo AL-AKHBAR in Arabic
26 May 88 p 4

[Article by Umaymah Kamal]

[Excerpts] Will Egypt allow foreign investment in the service sectors such as insurance, communications, telephones, information, etc.?

This question is the central point of the economic battle currently taking place in the corridors of the international economic organization known as GATT, which includes a large number of advanced and developing countries and is preparing to hold its eighth session which has been dubbed as the "Uruguay session."

This session will witness the biggest conflict between its rich and poor members. The advanced countries have included in the agenda an article calling for the freedom of exchange of services and for liberalizing them. This means that the door in the developing countries should be opened for investment in all vital services, for breaking the state monopoly of such services, and for the foreigner to be granted the same privileges, awards, and licenses as the citizen. What is more important is that member states should not legislate laws to the contrary except after consultations with GATT. Will Egypt agree to that?

Will liberalizing the services trade affect the Egyptian economy? Fadyah 'Abd-al-Salam, professor of economy at the National Planning Academy, says: "We must determine the importance of the services sector on the map of the Egyptian economy, particularly with regard to the balance of payments. The services sector includes shipping, tourism, insurance, and the Suez Canal transit fees. Throughout the early eighties Egypt achieved a surplus in the services budget which in 1982-83 reached 250 million pounds. But this surplus turned into a deficit of about 31 million pounds in 1986-87. This was, of course, due to world economic developments relating to oil prices.

"The effect of liberalizing services would become clear if we realize that the exports sector in Egypt needs more support and protection than it needs to open the door to foreign competition by international companies in the advanced countries that are far ahead in this field. This is evident in the drop in our petroleum exports during the past years, exports which constitute two-thirds of the total Egyptian exports, as well as the drop in remittances by Egyptians working abroad.

"Moreover, our agricultural and industrial exports are restricted by several factors, most important of which is world demand and the tendency by international blocs to impose protective restrictions and policies."

Regarding the possibility of boosting export services, Dr Fadyah says that this is determined by local and international conditions. For example, the Suez Canal revenues are determined by political conditions in the Arab region and by the rate of world trade. Also the possibility of increasing the Suez Canal revenues cannot be determined by Egypt alone; it is subject to an increase in world prices and to changes in world rates of exchange.

With regard to the possibility of activating and boosting tourism as part of the export sector, this too is limited since, despite all the efforts that are being made in this regard, Egypt's share of international tourism is no more than 5 percent, most of which depends on archaeological tourism.

She added that the most important sectors that will be affected by liberalizing services are those of tourism and air and land transportation. Tourism in Egypt is suffering from certain problems, and opening the door to competing foreign companies would lead to increasing tourist traffic abroad, which would weaken internal tourism which is still of a modest rate.

Despite all the restrictions which the state recently imposed on tourism abroad, such as the abolition of cash allowances to travellers, the importance of Egyptian tourism abroad is still significant. The liberalization of services would lead to preventing the achieving of the desired goal in the 5-year plan, which is to increase internal tourism to 10 percent of the Egyptian population.

According to Dr Fadyah 'Abd-al-Salam, in the field of sea and air shipping, liberalization will have many serious effects, since this is still a nascent industry that cannot enter into competition with international companies, particularly since 70 percent of Egypt's foreign trade is still being carried by foreign ships because the number of Egyptian ships is insufficient to serve the import and export trade. Also, a large proportion of foreign loans and credits stipulate that goods should be transported to borrowing countries by foreign ships.

She added, "What should be looked at present is not opening the door to competition still more, but rather boosting the efficiency of Egyptian companies by revising the rules of credit in Egyptian banks, with a view to increasing participation in this field that needs enormous investments. With regard to air transportation, it is primarily based on the Egyptian Aviation Institution. Reviewing the size of the present air fleet, the present situation in the airports, and Egypt's share of the world's traffic, it clearly shows that the expected rate of increase in the amount of passengers and freight is no more than 5 percent annually, which is a modest rate. Therefore, how can we remove the restrictions that protect this sector?"

Counselor Mahmud 'Asran, chairman of the permanent committee [not further identified], said that the committee has held several meetings in order to study the principle of liberalization. The meetings were attended by representatives of all the quarters concerned such as tourism, immigration, planning, and the Central Bank. Egypt, he added, agrees with the majority of the developing countries that service trade is different from commodity trade, and that sectors within this service differ, in that what can be applied to a hotel cannot also be applied to a bank or to an insurance company. Also

certain rules cannot be applied to the field of services, especially if this concerns the right of sovereignty or national security. Therefore, the Uruguay session will witness the most powerful conflict between the rich and the poor over the question of liberalizing services.

13305

Power Station Opened, New Funds Allocated for Energy

45000113a Cairo EGYPTIAN GAZETTE in English
9 Jun 88 p 3

[Text] The Minister of Electricity and Energy, Mr Mahir Abaza, yesterday opened the emergency 320 megawatt gas-heated power station in the west Delta town of Damanhur.

Accompanied by the governor of al-Buhayrah, Dr 'Adil Ilhami, the minister inspected the project to establish an additional power unit to the 110-megawatt Kafr al-Dawwar thermal power station.

The minister stated that LE 2 billion has been earmarked to establish emergency power stations, to confront power shortages which could result from the severe drop in the Nile water level, noting that the total amount of electricity generated in al-Buhayrah Governorate during the five-year plan will stand at 3000 megawatts.

Mr Abaza pointed out that the second stage of expansion projects at Damanhur power station, which is being financed by Japan and implemented by Canadian and Italian companies at a total cost of LE 400 million, will be operated according to the complex cycle system.

He added that a cooling tower will be established in Kafr al-Dawwar thermal power station in order to decrease the dependence on water from the Mahmudiyah canal.

Meanwhile, an Egyptian organisation for new and renewable energy will be founded in cooperation with the Italian Government, the minister said.

"A sum of 39 million dollars has been allocated by the Italian Government, the European Community, and the Egyptian Government, to provide the most up-to-date technology required by the organisation, with an aim to develop the uses of new and renewable energy," the minister announced after signing the accord with the Italian side.—MEN, GSS

/9604

Cotton Yarn Exports Rise Significantly

45000113b Cairo EGYPTIAN GAZETTE in English
11 Jun 88 p 2

[Text] The chairman of the technical sectors at the Spinning and Weaving Authority, Mr Ahmad al-Baz, stated that Egypt has exported about 100,000 tons of

Egyptian cotton yarn, worth 450 million dollars, which is an increase of 30,000 tons compared with the previous year. "Egypt has been able to supply the European Community (EC) with 24,000 tons of yarn, the USSR with 18,000 tons and the United States with 5,000 tons," Mr Al-Baz stated, adding that other quotas have been exported to Japan, Far Eastern countries and Arab and African countries. Mr Al-Baz elaborated that 300,000 tons of cotton yarn were produced by Egyptian plants this year, more than enough to cover all the requirements of the home market.

/9604

ISRAEL

Bureau Releases Statistics on Reduced Tourism

TA0770804 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew
1400 GMT 6 Jul 88

[Text] According to data released by the Central Bureau of Statistics, there has been a 28-percent drop in the number of tourists arriving in Israel during the second quarter of 1988, compared with the first quarter of the year. Our economic affairs correspondent points out that the decrease stems from the incidents in the territories. Some 84,000 tourists came to Israel in June, similar to the number of tourists in May.

JORDAN

Minister Comments on Areas of Economic Development

44040254 Kuwait AL-SIYASAH in Arabic
25 May 88 p 19

[Article: Dr Fayiz al-Tarawnah says a Sound and Flexible Economic Structure Is Most Important Factor for Optimism in Jordan Economy"]

[Text] Dr Fayiz al-Tarawnah, Jordanian minister of state for cabinet affairs, believes that there exists a progressive developmental economic "Jordanian experiment" considered in international circles to be so special as to warrant study and scrutiny. An evaluation of this experiment would assume that a number of interactive measures and indicators are taken into consideration. Those, according to Dr al-Tarawnah, are:

1. Jordan has surmounted obstacles to growth, one after another, to attain progress measurable over time in absolute terms and in relative terms when compared to like economies with similar stages of growth.

2. A movement by Jordan towards international diversification or perhaps to enter an era of development after going through stages of growth.

3. Cohesiveness of economic and social orientation, clearly defined political stands; close relations with both east and west politically and with north and south economically; and credibility throughout the world.

4. The individual is this country's real source of wealth in the areas of intellect, labor, discipline, support, and development.

5. The Jordanian social experiment is in balanced coordination in the equation of unified family standing fast against political winds that attempt to break up ties but have failed in face of solidarity.

Dr al-Tarawnah believes that a mix of all these standards and elements has enabled Jordan to reach its current status considered by many in various circles as a successful experiment worthy of study and scrutiny.

He deduces that Jordan is now at a stage that remained consistently successful under economic booms and recessions and in periods of political and military quiet and revolt in neighboring regions. That experiment has coalesced, succeeded, and progressed smoothly with coordination and deliberation. Flexibility is one of characteristics of this Jordanian economic experiment. This means that nothing is static or beyond change except the basic principles and guidelines which govern all variables in the national equation.

The kingdom has, since the third year of the 80s, suffered economic setbacks due to the nature of interlocking international relations that impacted our entire region. The Jordan economy was impacted by these influences because of its open nature. The same would apply, of course, to periods of prosperity and upward economic growth.

Soundness of Economic System Is Most Important Cause for Optimism

The main criterion for optimism is a sound economic structure capable of adapting and adjusting to sudden or extended setbacks because the foundation of this structure is capable of swaying in the opposite, or even the same, direction within predetermined parameters.

We are presently experiencing many negative and positive events which have, no doubt, left impacts necessitating adjustments and corrections and therefore a new main direction and ancillary channels in harmony with the overall strategy. I do not want here to get into regional and international variables except for the sake of enumeration.

International and Regional Variables

The recession, worldwide and in our region early in the 80s has caused domestic economic setbacks. This was followed by an unnatural movement in international

relations as a whole, caused by successive economic developments that differed in form and substance from historical or common commercial cycles.

There were price wars, unequal competition, changes in world trade norms, serious foreign indebtedness, soft markets for raw materials, fluctuations in currency prices and therefore interest rates, and a drain of world surpluses to the economic north.

The Iran-Iraq war intensified and widened in the Arab Gulf, causing changes in the economic marine map from the Gulf to the Red Sea.

Global talks between north and south failed while the relations among countries of the north remained vague, thus causing total confusion among countries of the south. The world economic system (fiscal as well as monetary) maintained its status quo as if the world were still in the 40s.

Changes in World Attitude Towards the Arab-Israeli Conflict

Dr al-Tarawnah believes that recent happenings in the region could be construed as positive developments that add elements of strength and of optimism for a new and better era with comprehensive economic consequences of which perhaps the most important are:

- a change in the international political stance towards the Arab Israeli conflict in that it is now supportive of His Majesty al-Husayn's call for an international peace conference of international legitimacy whose objective would be to establish in the Middle East a just and permanent peace based on Security Council resolutions 242 and 338. That change was brought about by: Al-Husayn's diligence in explaining the dimensions of the Palestinian question, the Arab-Israeli conflict, and the Arab Palestinian people's rightful claim on its national soil; the uprising by our families in the occupied territories which caused the Israeli occupier, for the first time ever, to really suffer for its persistence in its policy of occupation. That uprising has exposed the real face of the occupier and put an end to the notion of a "civilized democratic gentle lamb" with which Israel has saturated the world for many long years. The spontaneous uprising has introduced new types of struggle to the Israeli political game; the historic turnaround in the Iran-Iraq war as a result of Security Council resolution 598 and of the international will to put it into effect.

Economic Structural Imbalances

Dr al-Tarawnah pointed out that those developments impacted the Jordanian economy in the 80s causing a decline in its growth rate that had previously broken all records. Structural imbalances occurred in the labor market. Foreign exchange became a most pressing issue.

The issue of technology became overpowering because of the availability of hardware and software and the ability of work with and harness machines.

It became imperative that public and private administrative management develop and keep pace with another imperative—legislative development and planned organized investment initiated by the private sector and financed by its ordinary and venture capitals. Distribution, like production, has become a social, political, and also an economic reality.

Direction of Jordanian Economy

In short, according to Dr al-Tarawnah, developments of foreign origin or with domestic roots cannot be handled with economics alone but rather with organizational, educational, social and planned measures as part and parcel of the whole economic mix. What direction should the Jordan economy, supported by other sectors, take?

Private Initiative and Healthy Competition

First: It must maintain the economic course which leads to an economic system based on private initiative and healthy and organized competition.

The success of that course is assured by a public sector dedicated to laying legislative principles and foundations; a private sector oriented towards initiative, calculated risk, and innovation; and citizenry that interacts with the results of such initiative within the context of national pride.

Within that context, the Jordanian economy has, and still is, favored domestic products and local contractors and stood fast against international dumping. It introduced organizational understanding for institutional frameworks for goods and services such as privatization, the merger of similar and complementing institutions, support of production rather than consumption and bailing out corporations with acute funding difficulties, and adjusting and enhancing exemptions. It currently concentrates on exporting (goods and services) and attracting capital. The Jordanian economy has been able to minimize and contain the impact of the region-wide recession.

But the present calls for more introduction of new ideas and for newer and expanded investment opportunities such as venture capital, export credit, organizing private sector institutions, and creating export and maintenance firms. It also calls for the state to clarify and simplify rules and regulations.

Developing the Military Establishment

Second: It should continue to provide the military establishment, armed forces, public security, and civil defense with the best possible means for modernization, development, and deterrence in order to ensure security in the cities, villages, streets, and homes from border to border. This is an advantage we enjoy and the most important element of investment "funding" in the kingdom.

Development in Administration, Legislation, and Information

Third: The administrative organization and development of public sector institutions, especially those involved in services, must continue in order to make them self-dependent. Also to continue are the legislative modernization and development of the more important economic legislations because administration and legislation are the wings which the economy needs to take off and to maintain balance as it soars.

Fourth: Develop data bases and provide researchers, decisionmakers, and others with better and faster flow of updated information through a national data system and by bringing science and technology operations under the unified umbrella of the Supreme Council for Science and Technology which can boost research and development, monitor innovation, guide spending towards fruitful endeavors, and maintain comprehensive oversight.

Attention to and Treatment of Economic Malfunctions

Fifth: Serious and objective attention should be paid to the more serious malfunctions of the Jordan economy which are present more as a result of historic developments than of recent economic ones.

The most important of these malfunctions is unemployment resulting from a mismatch between supply and demand, an imbalance between the product of the educational system and the needs of the labor market, and quick entry in the labor market resulting from the age composition of the population.

There are radical treatments for the entire educational operation with all its various academic, professional, and trades sectors and for replacing immigrant labor with trained Jordanian workers. We could also increase the ability to stay in traditional markets and enter new ones within the context of technical assistance (such as our arrangement with Yemen). There are also other treatments to the problem of unemployment especially among university and college graduates.

A Procedure for Regional Planning

Six: Procedures should be instituted for comprehensive regional planning in coordination with sectorial planning to tackle such issues as population dispersion and the distribution of development income and profits among the various regions of the kingdom. This also is a

corrective strategy that goes hand in hand with radical handling of municipal and rural councils through their fiscal bases and by preparing development plans for them.

The Arab Dimension in the Jordan Economy

Seven: The Arab dimension in the Jordanian equation based on a nationalistic mission. The extraordinary Amman summit culminated a quiet long-range Jordanian effort that knows no despair or hopelessness. That Jordan effort calls for unification of the Arab body by virtue of historical, national, civilization, and economic logic. This led it to propose the principle of Arab national defense which the summit approved.

The Jordanian economy finds its Arab orientation through such channels as:

- finding the historical pragmatic motivation to affect Arab integration through bilateral relations that could develop into trilateral or multilateral ones such as the Arab causeway and such as will happen in the future with connections to the communications and electric grids, while simultaneously striving to achieve total integration. Jordan has created joint commissions for bilateral cooperation with sister Arab countries and this has led to many capitalized investment firms whose objective is to increase opportunities for cooperation and widen opportunities for commercial exchange.

- studying the feasibility of cooperation within the surrounding region as a complementary unit and a geographical extension within the current political reality. Examples are the Arab Red Sea concept and extending that cooperation to friendly nations bordering the sea or with interest in it.

- bridging the triangular relationship between the Gulf states and the ECC through Jordan.

The International Dimension

Eight: The international dimension of Jordanian relations with friendly nations individually or through such organizations as the Islamic Conference, Non-Aligned Nations, the Group of 77, the United Nations, or other economic blocks here and there.

Jordan has had ties with several joint commissions, fiscal protocols, and agreements with nations, development funds, and international organizations. It has gained validity in world markets and was one of the first beneficiaries of the new Japanese initiative.

Dr al-Tarawnah concludes by returning to the first basis he previously cited as the most important element for optimism, i.e. the structural soundness of the Jordanian economy. But the main basis that proves the first basis and forms the foundation for all other bases is the persistence, far-sightedness, and sincerity of our leader

and his commitment to land and man. He provides strength whenever weakness surfaces, optimism whenever there is pessimism, and light whenever darkness falls. When al-Husayn laid down the principles and basic foundations he also established landmarks and explained the vision. When he seeks for Palestine and for the Gulf a just peace based on right and international legitimacy and he seeks continuity for us and for our future generations. When we talk of the Jordanian experiment and of Jordan's international presence despite limited resources and small geographical size, we recognize success for al-Husayn's experiment and diligence and for the efforts and involvement of his sons.

12945

LIBYA

Government Recognizes Aboriginal Australian Passports

45000117 Sydney THE SYDNEY MORNING
HERALD in English 21 Jun 88 p 3

[Article by Antony Walker]

[Text] Cairo, Monday: The Aboriginal activist Mr Michael Mansell says Libya has enormously boosted efforts towards Aboriginal sovereign status in Australia by becoming the first nation to endorse "Aboriginal passports."

In a telephone interview from Tripoli, Mr Mansell said Libya's acceptance, as valid travel documents, of the Aboriginal passports used by his group of 12 Aborigines and two Maoris was the "first time any country outside Australia has given unequivocal support to the Aboriginal struggle."

He said the endorsement of Aboriginal passports amounted to an international agreement between the "Aboriginal nation" and the Libyan people. He would consider asking the Libyans whether they wished to establish an office in Australia to liaise with Aboriginal representatives.

Libyan diplomats were expelled from Australia in May 1987 after the Government accused them of seeking to foment trouble in the Pacific.

Mr Mansell would not identify the Libyan officials his group had met since they arrived in Tripoli about a week ago, and he would not say whether Libya had agreed to financially support Aborigines.

He said the Libyans intended to give practical assistance, but its form was "strictly a matter for the Aboriginal people and not for the public."

"It's none of their bloody business," Mr Mansell said. "We don't owe the Australian public anything."

Mr Mansell said there had been no discussion with Libya about possible support for armed struggle in Australia. "If we want to kill people, we don't have to get Libyan help to do it," he said.

He hopes to meet Colonel al-Qadhafi later this week. "Aborigines were fighting against 16 million people in Australia, most of whom are racist," he said.

An adviser to the Tasmanian Aboriginal Centre, Mr Mansell claimed Australia had tacitly recognised the Aborigines' separate status. Immigration officials let his group leave Australia on their Aboriginal passports and did not insist on seeing Australian travel documents.

He said the Libyans had showed his group how "they were passing on skills to workers." This process in Australia, he said, was crucial to Aboriginal sovereignty.

08309

OMAN

AL-MAJALLAH Interviews Omani Information Minister

PM1871313 London AL-MAJALLAH in Arabic
13-19 Jul 88 pp 17-19

[Interview with Omani Information Minister 'Abd al-'Aziz al-Rawwas by Matar al-Ahmadi in Muscat; date not specified]

[Excerpts] [Al-Ahmadi] Since the Strait [of Hormuz] represents a source of income for you, does seeing fleets there and outside the Strait alarm you?

[Al-Rawwas] (Laughing) You can only be concerned when you see fleets belonging to states with conflicting interests and inclinations amassing in a geographically confined area in an unprecedented manner, something not seen since World War II. We all know the reasons for this. And there is no need to go into details. All we hope is that these fleets will be legalized [taqnin] and there will be an international principle regarding ways of dealing with them in order to regulate the relationship among them and that between them and the region. This is because any strategic error, intentional or unintentional, could have sinister consequences.

[Al-Ahmadi] What is there to prevent legalizing these fleets and limiting their numbers, for instance?

[Al-Rawwas] We thought that the United Nations would be the organizing authority in this regard, for it sponsors international legitimacy. And if such a sponsor is not capable of taking action, we expect it, morally at least, not to accept anything which violates such legitimacy or allows the reins of power to slip away.

[Al-Ahmadi] In addition to the fleets' presence, new relations have emerged in the region. For example, the Soviet Union has established diplomatic relations with the Sultanate of Oman. Do you not believe it is too early for diplomatic exchange?

[Al-Rawwas] The opposite is the case. Our previous stand toward the Soviet Union was based on our rejection of the principle of interference in the internal affairs of others. At certain periods the Soviet Union interfered in our internal affairs. But as this interference has been eliminated and the Soviet Union now maintains the principles of peaceful coexistence among states, respect for every state's national sovereignty, and noninterference in the internal affairs of others—principles which are endorsed by the UN Charter for the states of the world regardless of race and creed—diplomatic exchange has been established. The Soviet Union took the initiative and made contacts with the sultan's government at the leadership level via special envoys during the Andropov era. After numerous meetings these endeavors were crowned with the establishment of diplomatic relations. I believe that these relations are in our interest as a member of the GCC and the Arab, Islamic, and international communities. We also deal with the other pivotal world power in order that we can determine the truth as it sees it and choose what suits our position and political conviction in order to preserve our national policy. We seek to participate in any international dialogue because without this options are limited. And if the Western bloc itself is dealing with the Soviet Union, why should we not do the same. A look at the map is enough to indicate that the Soviet Union should be dealt with like any other state, but this should be done cautiously and on the basis of each state's sovereignty. We believe that our principles, interests, and political ambitions have prompted such rapprochement, which we believe is positive and which we hope will benefit us, God willing.

[Al-Ahmadi] Some say that the establishment of relations with the Soviet Union is the price for stability in the Zufar area.

[Al-Rawwas] I repudiate this claim completely. The war in Zufar ended in 1975, whereas relations with the Soviet Union were established only in 1985, that is, 10 years later. So such a claim can only have been made by someone who does not read history or follow events.

The opening of the Soviet Embassy in the Sultanate of Oman coincided with the seventh Gulf summit. The summit was held in December 1987, but the embassy was opened in November of the same year. We agreed on this initially, since the USSR had a nonresident ambassador (in Jordan).

[Al-Ahmadi] Does that not mean that there was coordination among the GCC states in this regard?

[Al-Rawwas] Political relations among states concern the states themselves. GCC relations do not affect bilateral relations between GCC states and other states, as each state makes its own decision. Obviously any step taken by a GCC member complements those taken by the other states. But in this context there was no coordination or consultation with anyone.

[Al-Ahmadi] Although Oman is close to the zone of the Iraq-Iran war, you commit yourself to neutrality. Why?

[Al-Rawwas] It is natural for us to be committed to neutrality. The sultan's view is that the war is destructive and we must use every available means and method to stop it, regardless of the reasons why it erupted and continues. This stand prompted us to work with all other neutral international parties to find a means of ending the war. Our ambitions are based on bringing this war to an end. We deal with the states of the world on a bilateral basis. We are not a party to the war; we do not support one party while opposing the other. Nor has this been our objective. We do not believe there is anything to prompt this suggestion in the first place. Geographical factors govern the course of our relations with many of our neighbors, and the Islamic faith and our common interests dictate that as well.

SUDAN

Defectors Describe Recruitment for, Power Struggle Within SPLA

45040170A Khartoum AL-ASHIQA' in Arabic
10 May 88 pp 5-7

[Article: "Uncovering the Rebellion Movement: Camps to Recruit Children, Sharing of Non-Dinka Women"]

[Text] How does the rebellion movement obtain men? Do southerners enter its ranks from conviction and personal choice? What is the real state of affairs in the camps of the rebellion movement? Is the movement holding together politically, and does a spirit of agreement prevail in it? What is the nature of the Ethiopian role and Ethiopian assistance? Finally, what is the real relationship between the movement and certain relief organizations?

The questions are many and interconnected. If we could fully answer them, we would reveal the true nature of the rebellion movement. Some people think it has an inexhaustible well of men and that southerners pour into it from conviction. Others wonder about the movement's foreign relations and connections. Does this rebellion movement really have an such an extensive ability to rally others that whenever it makes a move toward foreign powers, it is able, quickly and easily, to get what it wants and widen the circle of contact with them?

Two officers of the rebellion recently returned to the country and defected from the movement. They may offer more or less complete explanations of the true state

of the rebellion movement and place before the readers a picture of the movement's internal developments, its methods and tactics, and the axes of its moves in the region.

The two officers are 2d Lieutenant Oyat Lawal, from the Shilluk tribe and the Kadoke district (he did not join the movement, but was forced into it), and 2d Lieutenant (Bill) Afri, from the Dinka tribe. Afri was born in Rumbek, but grew up and reached maturity in the north of the Sudan, having moved with his father to al-Muslimiyah, where he received his primary education. Afterwards, he studied in middle and secondary schools in Waw and Rumbek.

From the stories of the two officers, we can put together the following general picture of the rebellion movement.

1. Recruitment Methods

The usual picture of southerners striving to join the ranks of the movement, going voluntarily and by choice, is not true. There may be some who try to do so, but the majority of recruits are compelled and taken by force from their places of residence and tribal homes.

To get the true picture, let us listen to the two officers' story about how they were made to enlist—rather than enlisting—in the rebellion movement:

The first officer was in the city of Kadoke in 1986, when the rebellion's so-called Fashoda Battalion raided the city. They arrested him and a group of young people from the city. They were driven to the (Kwaylo) area on the Ethiopian border, and were taken from there by helicopter to (Palfam).

In Palfam, this member of the Shilluk found that there were 3,000 of his fellow tribesmen who had been forced to come to the camp virtually as prisoners transported to the camp. They were all taken away to (Itan) camp, a refugee camp.

The second officer and his father were also led away by force from Rumbek. His father was then released, while he himself was taken to Shambe on the Ethiopian border, then to Palfam camp, and then to the Itan refugee camp.

2d Lieutenant Bill Afri says that Lam Achol, commander of the region to which the lieutenant belonged, received a telegram from John Garang asking him to seize any youths between the ages of 12 and 18 and take them by force to the camps in Ethiopia. The lieutenant says that Lam Achol failed in this, and that he has recently begun to conscript all ages.

Dimo Camp for Gathering Children

The two officers mentioned that forced recruitment operations by the rebellion movement are not limited to able-bodied young men. Garang, it seems, is taking

precautions against the drying up of his source of fighters. He has opened a camp in the Kenya-Ethiopia border region known as the Dimo area. The camp is to receive 10 and 12-year-old children. They are received at this camp and spend 2 or 3 years before being sent to the basic training camp in Palfam.

Induction or Fine

The two officers say that one method of putting pressure on citizens in areas entered by the movement's forces consists of forcing villages that refuse to present their sons for induction into the ranks of the movement—the villages smuggle their young men into the jungles before the forces of the movement arrive—these villages are forced to pay fines equal to a large number of cattle. The movement imposes these fines because these citizens have failed to present their sons to become rebels. The villagers often turn over these cattle so as not to send their sons to their deaths.

2. The Movement's Connection to Relief Organizations

Although the connection between the movement and relief organizations operating on the Ethiopian side may not be direct, there is an indirect connection by means of which the rebellion movement provides itself with supplies and clothing. Workers in the organizations may not realize what is going on, or they may realize it and close their eyes to it.

The connection works as follows: After Garang's rebellion movement transports conscripted southerners by force into Ethiopia, it removes the clothes they were wearing and dresses them in sackcloth and old rags. Then it takes them to the refugee camps, especially the Itan camp, as refugees forced to flee by bad conditions in the Sudan. The relief organizations dispense supplies, food, and clothing to these recruits. They are then taken out of the refugee camps and transferred to military training camps.

3. What Is Happening Inside the Movement?

As for internal developments in the rebellion movement, it is very difficult to know anything but what floats to the surface from time to time and what is reported by defectors from the movement, especially if they were in positions that allowed them knowledge of developments. The two lieutenants have reported certain internal events that may add something new to the picture of the struggle within the rebellion movement. These events are:

—Confirmation of the arrest of Carabino Kwang, together with a veterinarian named Amon, on a charge of attempting a coup against John Garang. Carabino is said to have been a supporter of negotiation and peace.

—Major Arok Ton has been placed under arrest and stripped of all political posts and military authority. According to what has been mentioned, this was because he entered into negotiations with Fadlallah Burmah Nasir, former minister of state in the Defense Ministry. Arok Ton is now said to be awaiting trial.

—Tribal disputes between Shilluk and Dinka are increasing. Recently, a captain named Dolai Gil and four others were sentenced to death. All were from the Kadoke area. This was attributed to tribal disputes.

Dinka Oppression of Non-Dinkas

Evidence about the struggle within the movement points to an attempt by the Dinka to dominate the others. One feels this in a note of bitterness in the accounts of most of the returnees.

They say that all menial work is left to non-Dinkas.

Most officers are from the Dinka.

Those chosen for official posts are from the Dinka.

They say that offenders are not punished according to their crimes, but according to their tribal affiliation.

They say that when the Dinka take women of other tribes, the women become common property. However, if others take Dinka women, it is a crime punished by death.

12937

NIF Report Recommends Economic Measures, Highlights Food Products

*45040170B Khartoum AL-RAYAH in Arabic
5 Jun 88 p 1*

[Text] The economic office of the NIF has finished drafting a detailed report about the country's current economic conditions and steps needed to be taken to relieve the suffering of the masses.

Professor Badr-al-Din Taha, a member of the office, announced to AL-RAYAH that the report concentrated on problems of food security and providing basic commodities for citizens in the countryside and urban areas. It suggested a number of steps to deal with the internal and external gaps and to encourage investment in the country.

Professor Badr-al-Din explained that the concept of food security means providing the commodities of sorghum, wheat, dairy products, sugar, and oils. He indicated that the economic office of the NIF had proposed detailed policies for providing production inputs a sufficient time before the beginning of the season and for laying down a plan to guarantee a strategic reserve of the principal grains.

In addition, the policies included working for sorghum price stability for the producer and consumer, expanding wheat growing in the Northern Region by more than 200,000 feddans as well as in the al-Jazirah Project, and working to increase productivity.

As regards the remaining food commodities, the NIF called for encouraging investment in the areas of meat, dairy products, poultry, and fish, and for facilitating the process of financing these investment activities. It also called for supporting projects that exist but have been suspended in this area.

As for the other necessary commodities such as medicine, clothing, and housing necessities, the NIF office proposed creating the tax and customs concessions needed to speed the flow of these commodities and support local production of them. The report called for working to provide water for the urban and rural population by expanding the digging of wells, encouraging investment in this area, and attracting the help of friends and brother Arab countries.

In a related matter, the NIF economic office demanded a narrowing of the domestic gap by rationalizing government expenditures in accordance with definite measures. It called for collection of arrears owed to the state, in addition to an increased tax effort, without resorting to increasing the tax rates. This was in addition to reform of publicly-owned firms, so that they do not constitute a burden on the state, and investment in mines. The office suggested decreasing the bill for importing principal commodities, rationalizing the consumption of petroleum, and facilitating export operations to deal with the problem of the external gap.

The report called for creating a healthy and suitable climate for internal investment and for attracting foreign funds. It also stressed the need to concentrate on the rural sectors, where suffering is greater than elsewhere.

12937

Kenya Reportedly Doubles Aid to Garang Forces

*45040170C Khartoum AL-RAYAH in Arabic
1 Jun 88 p 1*

[Article by Salih Muhammad 'Ali]

[Text] A high security source stated to AL-RAYAH that Kenyan authorities have recently doubled their aid to the rebellion movement, now that drought and pressure by internal and Eritrean fronts have impacted the support Ethiopia gives to the rebels.

The source added that Kenyan support to Garang's movement aims to strengthen rebel positions around the Sudanese-Kenyan border and to encircle the Equatoria Region.

The source said that a number of facts supported by documents and proofs confirm that there are regular flights by cargo planes believed to be carrying weapons and supplies. These flights take off regularly from Kenya for rebel areas in southern Sudan on the Sudanese-Kenyan border. The information also shows that the Kenyan regime has given increased powers and freedom of movement to the rebels' relief organization in Nairobi. With the help of Western relief organizations, this organization constantly works to get supplies and food to the rebels in the South.

The source added that all this information and these proofs of what he called "Kenya's open friendship with the rebellion movement" have been presented to Sudanese authorities.

The source predicted that Kenya would soon become the rebels' principal source of support and would allow them to deploy themselves from its territory.

The source called for following a strong diplomatic and military policy to prevent the Sudan from being encircled and confined by Garang's movement with the assistance of African countries friendly to him. The source called for repaying the Kenyan regime in kind. He said that the Kenyan government is now witnessing strong opposition from the Kenyan people.

In a related development, AL-RAYAH has learned that the Sudanese delegation to the recent OAU meetings in Addis Ababa confronted the Kenyan delegation with these facts and told them that the Sudan was capable of responding to countries that interfere in the Sudan's internal affairs and cooperate with the rebels in their war against the legitimate government in the Sudan.

AL-RAYAH points out that the Sudanese and Kenyan sides are currently busy preparing for a meeting of the ministerial-level committee of the two countries. This meeting is expected to be held shortly in accordance with directives the foreign ministers of the two countries issued after their meeting on the occasion of the recent African summit conference in Addis Ababa.

A diplomatic source stated in a press release that the Sudan has demanded that Kenya close the Southern Sudan Relief and Reconstruction Agency, which is providing aid to John Garang under this cover.

It should be mentioned that the last meeting of the ministerial-level committee between the two countries was in 1982. The committee is expected to be reshaped to include representatives from the ministries of defense, trade, health, interior, tourism, the customs department, and the game warden force.

12937

SYRIA

Syria Claims Attempt To Bury Toxic Waste Aborted

44040255 Damascus AL-THAWRAH in Arabic
26 May 88 p 6

[Article by Bassam Ji'arah: "How Was an Attempt To Bury Toxic Industrial Wastes in the Country Thwarted?"]

[Text] While the problem of the shipload of toxic industrial wastes anchored since the end of April in front of the Italian harbor of Marina di Carrara continues to fester because Italian authorities have refused to allow these wastes to return to their original source in Italy, Milan, the problem of these wastes—or the next-to-last chapter of the problem—began when the Syrian government thwarted the unloading of this toxic cargo in the country and informed its owners that they would have to remove it to its country of origin, Italy.

Did the problem begin with the arrival of this toxic cargo at the port of Tartus? Will it end in the Italian port of Marina di Carrara, which originated the shipment and is responsible for its destruction? More importantly, how did this cargo reach the port of Tartus? How was it unloaded in the port? How did the concerned authorities deal with it? What consequences did it create? In the future, will it be possible to rectify the errors that resulted in the unloading of this cargo in the port of Tartus? Even though the attempt to bring these toxic gifts into the country for burial in it or in its territorial waters has been aborted and the necessary precautions have been taken to prevent environmental damage and return the wastes to their country of origin, and even though the appropriate governmental authorities are continuing to investigate the circumstances associated with the arrival of the cargo in the port of Tartus in order to prevent the future arrival of such materials and to question the relevant agencies should there be found to have been negligence or carelessness, it is important now to get a precise idea of the circumstances that preceded, accompanied, and followed the arrival of the cargo of toxic industrial materials in the port of Tartus.

To begin:

According to Agence France Presse, the problem of the Syrian freighter Zenobia has again highlighted a problem with international dimensions: How are millions of tons of toxic and dangerous residues to be destroyed? All countries have refused to receive the freighter in question, which is anchored in front of the Italian harbor of Marina di Carrara, because it is carrying 2,200 tons of chemical wastes that the Syrian Arab Republic refused to allow to be unloaded and returned to the country of origin.

Factories in wealthy countries are tempted to dispose of chemical or radioactive wastes by sending them to a poor country that cannot really estimate the danger of such toxic gifts. There currently exist marine lines for this kind of commerce. The host country benefits by strengthening its hard-currency reserves; the producer avoids paying the enormous costs of destroying such wastes in his own country. Under the pressure of public opinion in the wealthy countries, especially the United States, the policy of exporting wastes has become more difficult. International organizations and the governments of wealthy countries now sharply criticize such operations. The same thing has happened in Third World countries, which have taken action under the influence of environmental organizations.

Thus, the EEC has decided to stop the export of its countries' wastes to other countries, without the approval of the host country's government. The OECD has established a similar regulation, based on principle that the type of disposal in the poor countries should be similar to that in the industrial countries.

Beside the Zenobia case, many examples have indicated the seriousness of this problem. One of the most notorious ones was the disaster that resulted from the transporting of 3,000 tons of toxic waste produced by the American city of Philadelphia. These wastes were shipped by night to Haiti, and the cargo was registered as "fertilizer."

The city of Philadelphia shipped 15,000 tons of similar wastes to one of the Guinean islands. The withering of trees led to the discovery of the true nature of the cargo, which was scheduled to amount to 85,000 tons of chemical wastes. Another notorious episode was the American ship loaded with wastes that travelled the length of the American continent round trip, looking for a land that would receive its cargo, before returning to its point of departure in New York.

The European Parliament in Strasbourg has criticized these practices and has described them as unethical and criminal. In particular, the parliamentarians raised the subject of a contract between European and American companies and Guinea-Bissau, which [word illegible] has disapproved of, and which specifies that Guinea-Bissau will assume responsibility for disposing of 15 million tons of industrial wastes over a period of years in return for \$120 million a year, a sum much higher than the country's net national product.

It appears that the African continent is the preferred place for storage operations. The Congo and Senegal are said to have signed lucrative contracts with American companies, with storage fees amounting to \$100 per barrel.

The importance of the problem can be estimated in millions of tons, on the one hand, and in [illegible] of dollars, on the other hand. Twenty-four countries of the OECD produce 300 [illegible] of dangerous wastes a year, and the cost of [disposal amounts] to \$12 billion.

Five years ago, the director of the UN program for [illegible], Dr Mustafa Tulbani, in a report that raised an [illegible] outcry in its time, indicated that toxic wastes constitute a threat [illegible] in human history.

Despite laws governing the matter, the export of industrial wastes does not appear to be going to stop. According to specialists, the principal reason is that the rich countries are ceaselessly producing new materials, with even more restrictions, sometimes very severe, being imposed on producers.

This is where the Agence France Presse report on the problem of nuclear wastes ends. If we have digressed a bit, the goal has been to learn the size and dimensions of this problem and how it is being handled. For us, however, the most important thing is to learn the circumstances that preceded, accompanied, and followed the arrival of the cargo of toxic industrial wastes in the harbor of Tartus.

To be more precise: Why did a cargo of chemical wastes that turned out to be highly contaminated with radioactive material enter the port of Tartus without a technical examination?

Before presenting the preliminary results of the local authorities' investigations into the circumstances of the importation of this toxic cargo into the harbor of Tartus, we must present another account. Its source is the Kuwaiti News Agency (KUNA) and the SANA representative in Rome. According to the report, dated 7 May 1988: a commercial vessel loaded with tons of toxic industrial wastes has been stopped in front of the northern Italian port of Marina di Carrara for 10 days and is in danger of exploding at any moment because Italian authorities have until now refused to return these wastes to their original source in Italy. The Syrian-owned ship Zenobia arrived in Italy from Syria after the Syrian Arab Republic refused to allow the toxic wastes to be unloaded on its territory.

These toxic industrial wastes, estimated at about 2,100 tons, circled the world for an entire year and then returned to their original source, Italy, because all countries of the world refused to allow the deadly cargo to be unloaded on their territory.

Ownership of these toxic wastes can be traced to the (Jilli Wax) Company of Milan, which specializes in the toxic waste disposal. The company is now disavowing responsibility for this cargo, which originally set out for Djibouti, where the authorities refused to unload it. It was then transferred to another steamer and headed last year for Venezuela in South America, which also refused to

allow the unloading of the cargo on its territory. The wastes were then loaded on board a Maltese ship that carried them around the world.

As of 7 May 1988, an Italian court was studying the possibility of issuing a court order to confiscate the cargo and solve the problem with all its legal consequences, now that everyone realizes that for the vessel to remain waiting at sea constitutes a danger to the crew and the environment.

On 18 May, SANA carried a statement by Francisco (Zizuto), a defense attorney for the company that owns the ship, (Tubalu) Shipping, that 2 members of the ship's 18-member crew had become seriously ill because of leakage of toxic materials from barrels. He added that aboard the ship there was a state of emergency, endangering the lives of the crew and constituting a real threat to the Italian coast.

The Problem

This is what the news agencies have reported from Italy. But what happened in Tartus? How did matters proceed there?

On 21 February 1988, the prime minister issued Decree 499. It contained the following:

"In accordance with the requirements of public welfare, the prime minister has decided the following: Whereas the governor of Tartus has given notice by letter and telegrams of the arrival in the country of more than 2,076 tons of harmful radiation-contaminated chemicals loaded in barrels for the purpose of burial in the country or in its territorial waters, and that the manner of importation has been altered to transit; and whereas this matter involves danger to the citizens, territorial waters, and other elements of the environment; and whereas the country's public safety plans have been violated—we have decided to form a committee including:

1. the minister of state for environmental affairs (chairman)
2. the assistant interior minister for police affairs
3. the governor of Tartus
4. the general director of harbors
5. the director of the Atomic Energy Agency
6. the director of customs
7. the head of the Tartus branch of the Bureau of Surveillance and Investigation.

"The task of this committee is to investigate the circumstances surrounding the entry of this harmful radiation-contaminated material and the people behind this criminal act. The committee is to present the results of the investigation and suggestions to the prime minister's office, so that the appropriate decision can be made."

However, before we present the conclusions this committee reached in its investigations, we ask what the issuance of this decree means.

We fully believe that the very making of such a decision means that the government is seriously and sincerely committed to investigating all the circumstances that accompanied the arrival of this cargo in the port of Tartus and calling to account everyone that the investigations show was involved in the case. This is the first thing.

Secondly, the decree explicitly states that the bringing in of toxic and radiation-contaminated industrial wastes is considered a criminal action, because it causes harm to the citizens and the environment and violates the country's public safety plans.

Thirdly, the decree contained an important fact—that the purpose for bringing these materials into the country was to bury them in it or in its territorial waters, and that the manner importation was altered in order to achieve this purpose.

Committee Report

The committee charged with investigating the case met on 2 April 1988. It reached the following conclusions:

The committee believes the owner of the cargo, Muhammad (Tabalu), was aware of the cargo's danger and its toxic effects on all elements of the environment—human beings, animals, and plants. According to Document 1 presented by him, he acknowledges that they were industrial wastes. He has also stated that no advance sum was paid as price for them, or even freight charges; only the profit after disposal of the merchandise was left for him. He did not accompany the cargo with any official original document certified by the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Industry, the Atomic Energy Agency, or any other official organizations that issue certificates attesting that this shipment would not be injurious to public health. Instead, he was satisfied with (Jilli Wax) Company's letter unapproved by any official source. The letter stated that the merchandise was not contaminated.

The committee report adds: "One should bear in mind that attempts have been made to bring such materials into the country for burial, with large sums of money being paid to the country for its acceptance of such wastes."

The committee recommended that Muhammad (Tabalu) be held for further questioning to determine his previous activities in this area. The committee also recommended that a letter be sent to all our embassies abroad to inform these countries, bearing in mind the danger involved in the arrival of such cargo in their ports. The Central Bureau of Surveillance and Investigation in Tartus should be charged with scrutinizing documents carefully and inventorying any similar operations carried out during the last 2 or more years by the said Muhammad (Tabalu), his agents, or the companies with which he deals. The committee recommended that the General Customs Administration and the General Atomic

Energy Agency be charged with studying all necessary means of preventing future importation of similar wastes and residues and establishing the chemical and radiological safety of all materials entering the country permanently or in transit. This should be done by all possible means and measures available to the General Customs Administration and the Atomic Energy Agency.

The committee also recommended that the ship (Makiri) be blacklisted for transporting harmful radioactive materials without original documents and certificates permitting the transportation of such materials from their place of registration and origin. The committee also recommended blacklisting any ship carrying such materials in the future.

More Clearly

The committee, which was formed by a decision of the prime minister, decided that Mr Muhammad (Tabalu) was aware of the danger of the cargo and its damaging and toxic effects on all elements of the environment, inasmuch as no advance sum or freight charges had been paid for it, with only the profit after disposal of the goods left to him.

Questions We Ask

Faced with such a confession by the owner of the cargo, can anyone else justify what happened as having been merely an error?

How was it possible to leave the owner of the goods free throughout the period that has elapsed?

Can the agencies concerned with approving the importation of such goods be absolved of responsibility for its entry into the port of Tartus and its having been unloaded in one of the yards of the port without the required technical tests?

We will briefly put off answering these questions, while we review the statements that those implicated provided during the investigation carried out by the leadership of the Tartus police.

Mr Muhammad Ahmad Musawi said that late in November 1987, Mr Muhammad (Tabalu) asked him to inquire about the charge for importing about 2,000 tons of material in barrels. He answered the same day and gave him the approximate cost, based on entry of the material into the free zone in Tartus. Early in December, he went to (Tabalu's) office, at the latter's request. (Tabalu) informed him that the steamer would arrive in a week and asked him to bring the material into the free zone. He had been informed by the Marine Consignments Company that the steamer would arrive on 10 December 1987.

[Musawi], realizing that importing the material into the free zone would require the immediate payment of fees, informed (Tabalu) of this and asked him to make arrangements. Then, however, a telex arrived for the consignments company changing the destination of the goods from the free zone to port of Tartus transit. The material was unloaded in the port on 13 December 1987 and placed in Yard 1 under his supervision. Unloading was completed about 15 days later, and the goods remained in the yard awaiting instructions from Mr (Tabalu). In the report, Mr Musawi affirmed that his role was to only clear the material in the name of the bridge office. (Tabalu) asked another clearing office to transport the material, since it required a B-6 declaration which lay outside the authorization of his office. The only reference for the merchandise was Mr. (Tabalu).

Mr Muhammad (Tabalu), the owner of the cargo, stated the following in his deposition:

About 3 months ago, while he was in Greece, the office of the Greek company (Alsa) offered him some merchandise and presented a register of its contents to him. It consisted of solvent residues, dissolved chemicals, and old pharmaceuticals. The weight was about 2,146 tons. The material was in barrels certified (according to the attached copy of a certificate, Document 2) to be free of any damage. (Editor: The certificate lacks any official character; it neither bears the seal of the company, nor is it validated by any official agency or authority.)

The owner of the shipment added that he did not know the origin of the goods. He was told the origin was Venezuela. He accepted the offer on condition that if there was any defect in the goods, he would return them at the company's expense. There was no notarized agreement between himself and the company, nor was a contract drawn up. An agreement was made with the company's representative, Nicholas (surname unknown). The reason for not drawing up a contract can be attributed to confidence and the existence of previous accounts between them. The price of the goods was not specified, nor was its price paid. It was agreed to divide the profits equally, after deducting expenses for transportation, duties, and storage. He was asked that the goods be shipped to the port of Tartus transit. However, they arrived on the Cypriote freighter (Makiri) addressed to the free zone. He undertook to change the destination to Tartus transit because of the difficulty and the many charges for bringing the goods into the free zone. He commissioned the customs clearer Musawi to deal with the cargo—he had no connection with it—and said he would try to guarantee a certificate of origin for the goods.

He confessed that he agreed with some Lebanese to transport the goods to Lebanon; however, suspicion as to their condition and a customs warning had prevented this. He said he began to load the material on the steamer Zenobia on 12 February 1988 to return it and export it to Greece. Mr (Tabalu) presented a letter translated into

Arabic and signed by (Jilli Wax) Company, SpA, Opera, Milan, guaranteeing that the material was nonradioactive, uncontaminated, and not detrimental to public health. He said that he had not intended to import the material into Syria; he had received no sum of money from the company in return for importing or disposing of the goods; and he did not know whether it was radioactive. He had been surprised by the customs notification to transport it away.

Marine Consignments Company

In its letter number 547 s.t., dated 14 February 1988, the company stated in reply to the request of the head of the Tartus police that the steamer (Makiri) arrived in the port of Tartus on 10 December 1987, carrying 2,076.6 tons of chemical products in drums and barrels and 7 containers. The port of loading was Puerto (Tablo), Venezuela. The material arrived in care of the free zone in Tartus, but a telex came from the (Jan Tshart) Company of Rotterdam, Holland, indicating a need to change the destination of the goods to Tartus transit. The telex indicated that the consignment should be turned over to a person who would present the original bill of lading dated 8 February 1988. Mr Muhammad (Tabalu) came bringing the original bill of lading, but permission to turn over the merchandise was not given due to there being about \$33,000 in obligations outstanding.

As for the certificate of origin of the goods, the goods arrived accompanied only by bills of lading, statements of tonnage, a declaration of the content of the ship's holds, an announcement by the agents listing the exchange of telexes, information, and correspondence, and the receipt of instructions and conditions for delivery by the company operating the steamer, (Jan Tshart) of Rotterdam, Holland. The Directorate of Customs, Tartus, had taken a number of measures. On 27 January 1988, it notified Messrs Muhammad (Tabalu) and Muhammad Musawi that the merchandise must be transported away immediately within no more than 15 days from 30 January 1988. This was based on analyses of the material, samples of which had been sent for laboratory analysis in Damascus. A reply from the Atomic Energy Agency (letter no. 9/596 s.d., 2 February 1988) arrived stating that the merchandise was highly contaminated with radioactive material produced by nuclear fission, should be transported away immediately, and no one should stay near it. Letters were exchanged between the Directorate of Customs and the port concerning the need to remove the goods immediately.

The official in charge of Tartus customs said that the unloaded merchandise were remaining in the warehouses and yards of the port, waiting for the presentation of its customs procedures, with a maximum time limit of 6 months. During this period, the customs department had the right to exercise surveillance and to correspond with the investment company to stop or prevent any behavior if danger or spoilage materialized. At the end of

the period, it had the right to sell the merchandise it was holding. A customs inspection of the merchandise could be made without a customs procedure. In the case of this merchandise, no procedure had been presented to date.

On 26 January 1988, on directions from the governor of Tartus, the field committee of the Atomic Energy Agency was summoned to inspect the merchandise. No confirmable danger was discovered. Samples were drawn and were sent with the same committee to Damascus.

In a 28 January 1988 telephone conversation with the director of the Atomic Energy Agency, it was stated that harm could be caused if this material were handled after the barrels were opened. He advised transporting it away immediately. Based on this, the customs directorate undertook the measures mentioned above, notifying the owner of the merchandise of his obligation to transport the merchandise away and sending a letter to the directorate of the harbor. Based on the request of the persons involved for permission to remove the goods immediately on the steamer Zenobia, which had arrived at the port of Tartus on 10 December 1987, before the presentation of a customs procedure, the Directorate of Customs, Tartus, agreed and informed the harbor police. Loading began on 12 February.

The police report adds that the operations accompanying the arrival, unloading, and storage of the material took place in accordance with regulations. The person involved had agreed to transport the material away. This being the case, the soundest legal and administrative solution was to reexport the merchandise, based on its being a material whose storage was prohibited under Section 106 of the customs law. Nuclear analysis procedures were not mandatory for goods passing through transit. The Atomic Energy Agency had issued nothing that would require its nuclear analysis. Regulations in force required nuclear analysis only for food products imported into the country. This is what the head of the atomic energy stated during a 15 February 1988 telephone conversation. Written directives exist confirming this.

The head of the storage department of the Tartus harbor company stated that all the measures undertaken by the port to unload the merchandise and store it in a yard took place in accordance with the regulations in force. No operation had taken place outside the regulations or laws.

The Important Thing

The police report concludes that the investigations have proven that the owner of the goods applied to import it after he had become convinced that it was harmless, based on an official certificate delivered to him. The reason for transmitting the request to place the merchandise in transit instead of the free zone as had been scheduled was that placement in the free zone required

the immediate payment of duties. The destination was therefore changed to transit, port of Tartus. The material was thereupon unloaded and placed in Yard I.

Finally, the reports say removal of the material from the country by its owner must be followed up and that he must be charged with carrying this out with all haste.

This is how the Marine Consignments Company, the Tartus Customs Directorate, and the harbor company dealt with the toxic industrial wastes. Thus, from the report submitted to the head of the Tartus Province police and from the police reports we discover that the owner of the goods bears no responsibility, since he possesses a certificate from the company owning the merchandise to the effect that it carries no danger and does not contain radioactive materials, and that reexporting the merchandise ends the case. Likewise, the General Customs Administration, and with it the Marine Consignments Company and the Port of Tartus Company, bear no responsibility, because all the operations involved in unloading, receiving, and storing the merchandise took place correctly and within the regulations and directives in effect.

But can one trust these conclusions? We do not think so, for the following reasons:

First, the letter that was considered to be in favor of the owner of the cargo, Mr (Tabalu), as indicating that the merchandise was not radioactive or contaminated and would not harm public health, cannot be accepted, since it bears no seal with the name of the company and has not been validated by the relevant authorities or any other source. Why it was considered an official document is another question.

If the (Jilli Wax) Company is involved internationally in the destruction of toxic industrial wastes, how could the authorities have been unaware of such a fact, bearing in mind that more than one previous attempt to persuade Syrian authorities to bury such wastes in return for large monetary compensation had failed because the authorities understood the dangers of such an operation?

If the change in the manner of importing the goods from free zone to transit took place because bringing in goods requires the payment of immediate duties, this justification falls when we know that Mr al- Musawi informed the owner of the merchandise, Mr (Tabalu), of the size of the duties owed by him and that he afterwards agreed to bring the goods into the free zone, indicating that Mr (Tabalu) had dealt professionally with the port, owned the freighter Zenobia, and already knew quite well that importing merchandise into the free zone required the immediate payment of duties.

Given Mr (Tabalu)'s previous doubts about the goods, as shown by his obtaining a letter from the (Jilli Wax) Company affirming that the merchandise was not radioactive or contaminated and would not affect public

health, how can one trust his statements that he dealt with the Greek (Alsa) company without obtaining a certificate of origin, without agreeing on the price of the merchandise, and without drawing up a contract? Another important point concerns the customs department's request that the merchandise be transported away, even though preliminary reports had indicated the absence of anything that would require that the goods be refused. The question is how the customs department could make such a request as long as the investigation of the merchandise had not shown it to contain material that was radioactive or harmful to the environment and public health.

If the customs department gave the owner of the merchandise a time limit of 15 days to transport the merchandise away, why was it not removed until a month after the time limit?

How can the customs department prosecute the owner of the cargo and fine him six to seven times the value of the merchandise because it was material injurious to the public health, when the owner of the cargo never paid a price for it and no price was originally set?

If a thorough investigation of the cargo confirmed as of 2 February 1988 that it was highly contaminated with radioactive material produced by nuclear fission, why was no investigation of the people involved held before 14 February 1988?

If the headquarters of the company that owns the cargo, (Jilli Wax), are in Italy, why did the owner of the cargo try to reexport it to Greece, in spite of its containing radioactive materials?

If the agreement between the owner of the cargo and the Greek (Alsa) company specified return of the merchandise to the company if some damage was found in it, why did this company not receive the merchandise after its transportation away from Tartus?

As long as Mr (Tabalu) imposed such a condition, does that not mean that he doubted the safety of the cargo?

If the owner of the cargo is carrying a letter from (Jilli Wax) Company saying that the cargo is not radioactive or contaminated and will not affect public health, why is the company now refusing to take back its merchandise?

Large questions—and along with them many question marks and exclamation points now make their presence felt in the discussion and debate. They indicate the existence of negligence and carelessness by various concerned agencies in Tartus, particularly customs. What is certain is that matters were being arranged for this cargo to be buried on Syrian ground or in Syrian territorial waters. However, local security authorities—they deserve thanks—frustrated the attempt after having discovered the true nature of the cargo and its dangerousness.

If in its dealing with this case the government has shown great resolution and seriousness through its objective and comprehensive view, it has also taken the necessary measures to call to task those whom the report shows to have stood behind this highly criminal action or to have neglected to preform their duties. The government has also issued the necessary directives to prevent the arrival of such materials in the future.

12937

Member of National Alliance Discusses New Party

JN1007201688 Cairo AL-MUSAWWAR in Arabic
8 Jul 88 p 9

[by Sana' al-Sa'id]

[text] A new party called the National Democratic Party [Al-Hizb al-Watani al-Dimuqrati] has been announced in Syria.

The new party, says Dr Ahmad Sulayman al-Ahmad, is an embodiment of the Syrian people's ambition at this stage. It is based on democracy, the demand for 100-percent civil rule, and the full exclusion of intelligence.

Dr Ahmad Sulayman al-Ahmad is a professor of modern literature at Damascus University. He is a poet and thinker and has written more than 40 books. His father is an imam, the 'Alawite Shaykh Sulayman al-Ahmad. He is a member of the General Secretariat of National Alliance for the Liberation of Syria which represents the highest authority of the Syrian opposition.

Al-Ahmad tells AL-MUSAWWAR: Syria is experiencing a suffocating economic crisis, represented by hunger and food shortages, deterioration of the standard of living, and disappearing health care. The value of the [Syrian] pound has declined to rock bottom. The dollar today is equal to 60 pounds, while it was equal only to 14 pounds when all the cooperatives and many factories, on which millions were spent, were closed. Syria's catastrophe, he adds, is represented in this formidable contradiction between two sides, on one of which are a number of millionaires led by al-Asad himself, whose fortune is estimated at \$50 billion.

Dr Sulayman says that the Syrian regime is facing the risk of collapse. This collapse is inevitable and very near. Al-Asad's stand has many shortcomings. Under al-Asad's rule, Syria is experiencing a ruthless dictatorship that exploits sectarianism as a game to prolong the life of the regime. This regime depends on the 'Alawites, who comprise about 2 million of the Syrian people, that is, 10 percent, who support [as published] the hopes and aspirations of 90 percent for freedom.

He says that the Syrian regime is expert in evading crises and that it has exploited the situation in Lebanon and the Iraq - Iran war in its favor, which we find that

al-Asad's call for achieving strategic parity is mere charlatanism and deception because his major support is for Israel. He says: in fact, Israel's interests lie in the existence of this regime. This regime's alliance with Iran is within the framework of the Israeli scheme to destroy every Arab force in the region. Moreover, it has used Camp David as a pretext to sever relations with Egypt. The whole world now knows of President Husni Mubarak's honorable stands toward the Palestine question. These stands prove his unique and genuine pan-Arab spirit.

Dr Ahmad Sulayman al-Ahmad reveals to AL-MUSAWWAR that the Syrian regime has contacted him offering him to return, but he set his conditions, which are not personal but are related to the homeland's issues. The most important of these issues is that democracy is the only means to save the country and that reconciliation cannot be achieved except by the toppling of the regime. Following this stand, the regime attempted to liquidate him physically. They have sent two persons to Paris to monitor his movements and to assassinate him. However, this attempt has failed.

TUNISIA

MTI Prepares for Legislative Elections

45000121 Tunis AL-ANWAR in Arabic 19 Jun 88 p 2

[Report by the political affairs editor]

[Text] Has the Islamic Tendency Movement [MTI] begun to prepare for the legislative elections prematurely?

This question may seem to be strange now because the MTI is demonstrating the behavior of a movement that is still striving to straighten its ranks and to control the schismatic attempts which have appeared at the heart of the Movement recently and which have indeed continued even after Rachid Ghannouchi's emergence from prison.

However, this same question is no longer strange when we learn that the MTI made up its mind after Ghannouchi's release from prison, and his public and secret contacts with more than one party, to exploit the "margin" which the law will permit it, and to participate in any major political action concerning Tunisia as a whole or the opposition movements as parties.

AL-ANWAR has found out that a group of MTI members has recently sought to explore ways for them and for the Movement to deal with the coming legislative elections, whether it is recognized before the election date or after it.

AL-ANWAR has also found out that this same group may have contacted other groups affiliated with two authorized political parties and that perhaps discussions took place during these meetings about the possibility of

collaboration in the electoral process in joint lists with one of these two parties. AL-ANWAR has also learned that these discussions have not achieved any tangible results or agreement so far but that they also have not produced a definite refusal from the two parties.

AL-ANWAR has learned that the abovementioned Islamic group has expressed its readiness to harmonize its platform and its slogans at this stage with the slogans of the rest of the parties concerned with supporting democratic freedoms and human rights and with supporting the Arab and Islamic tendency, which the regime ruling in Tunisia began after the November 7th Movement.

AL-ANWAR has likewise learned that the MTI members have decided to work in this direction; i.e., the direction of alliance with the party which accepts them as representatives in its lists during the coming legislative elections.

Maybe this tendency will crystallize after the 'Id al-Adha [Feast of Immolation, or Greater Bairam] during which the MTI members anticipate an executive pardon for the rest of the prisoners. They also believe that this pardon will permit them a wide field of movement, be it on the political level or on the level of controlling the extremist ideas in the MTI.

Minister of Education Discusses Reform Measures

45190072a Tunis *REALITES* in French
26 May-1 Jun 88 p 16

[Interview with Minister of National Education Mohamed Hedi Khelil; date and place not given]

[Text] In connection with the current discussion on reform of the education system, Minister of National Education Mohamed Hedi Khelil has the job of keeping the promises made in an ambitious program. Mr Khelil is establishing the foundations for the future direction of reform from the basic education level to scientific and civic education.

[Question] The president of the republic has just given his approval for the gradual establishment of basic schooling in our country. What would be the reasons dictating such a choice?

[Answer] It should be mentioned that the endorsement of the establishment of basic schooling by the president of the republic is a historic decision and a decision to improve the civilization of Tunisian society. Moreover, this project will be integrated into the context of overall reform of the educational system, currently the subject of broad national debate.

This choice resulted on the one hand from an analysis of our experience in the educational field over the past 3 decades, and on the other hand, from the general consensus of the national debate. In addition, these reasons are justified by the goal of the basic schooling system, which is designed above all:

—To ensure full control of the problem of early dropout, which is of ever increasing concern to the national collective, and

—To give young people, some of whom are destined to leave the educational system following basic schooling, a suitable basic level of education which will allow them to master communication, calculation, and methodological tools, and will guarantee young people the kind of training which will serve them in life while at the same time developing in them a sense of responsibility and civic duty.

[Question] What results have been achieved in the countries which have made this experiment?

[Answer] It is necessary to remember that in the majority of the developed countries, 9 or even 10 years of basic education no longer represents an experimental stage, but is instead a reality. These countries are contemplating a more ambitious goal—advancing 80 percent, or even more, of each school generation to the baccalaureate level every year, in order to raise the basic cultural level as much as possible. Moreover, the majority of the Arab countries have either carried out or embarked upon this experiment.

The results obtained can only be beneficial, for the reasons mentioned above. In Tunisia, it would also be necessary to improve what we have and to get everyone involved. Through responsible participation by all partners, schools will be guaranteed a basic amount of autonomy in their organization and daily function.

[Question] What will guarantee the success of basic schooling? Won't the mixing of lower level teachers and professors be likely to give rise to problems?

[Answer] Your question gives me an opportunity to explain that the creation of basic schooling will not necessarily entail formal cooperation by these two groups of teachers, because it has not been determined that all of the 9 years of education will be conducted in a single location. It will, however, contribute to establishing better cooperative relations among these teachers and to make the various educational institutions complement one another.

Newly Elected UGET Executive Bureau Discusses Student Affairs

45190072b Tunis *REALITES* in French
19-25 May 88 pp 13-16

[Round table discussion with UGET Executive Bureau members conducted by Ben M'rad and Samira El Amri; date and place not given]

[Text] The meeting of the 18th Special General Union of Tunisian Students (UGET) Congress has shaken up the university world and eliminated a 17-year obstacle. The new Executive Bureau finds itself faced, however, with formidable reorganizational tasks, in addition to the cunning rebellion of a student faction unhappy about paying the price of this rejuvenation.

REALITES gathered together the majority of the members of this newly elected body to discuss the problems in their union, as well as university problems in general. These members, the majority of which have leftist inclinations, wanted to keep to the language of sincerity, and expressed their confidence in the combative path loudly and clearly. "Only those elected by the base level can be members of the Executive Bureau," they repeated constantly. In their view, the UGET leadership is in no way a partisan constellation, but derives from the sovereign will of the students. This is another way of preventing a repetition of the harsh blow dealt at Korba.

REALITES: Let us begin with the pre-congress period. What have the various obstacles been, and how has it been possible to overcome them?

Mohsen Marzouk: The various obstacles encountered throughout the process were to be found on two levels. The first had to do with the student movement itself. The repression and the lack of student unity prevented the development of an organized plan. We have examined our errors and proceeded with self-criticism. It was necessary to overcome the subjective difficulties and hindrances—our exclusion has lasted 17 years. In addition, there is the position of the Islamic Tendency Movement (MTI). Initially, it favored the General Union of Tunisian Students, which included the members who are today heading the MTI—Abdelfattah Mourou, among others.

The various factions and tendencies which supported the UGET or which opposed any form of organization based their actions on a defeatist point of view. They thought that the UGET would never be established.

Nawfel Zaidi: The state bore a direct responsibility for what happened. And this was true from 1971 on, when a Destourian minority organized to carry out a takeover during the 18th UGET Congress in Korba and established itself at the head of the union. We should not overlook the February 1972 movement, when 6,000 students tried to put an end to the work of the 18th

Congress, or the establishment of the trade union structures in 1973, and the holding of two unauthorized UGET congresses in 1975 and 1977.

The decade of the 1980s provided an opportunity for the MTI to strike another blow, one which produced a split in the ranks of the student movement. The efforts put forth for the holding of the 18th Special Congress were halted at the level of the provisional trade unions. Continuous police encirclement of the student body also reduced the freedom of the student movement.

Hamadi Elech: A number of factors combined to hinder the meeting of the 18th Special Congress. On the one hand, there was the lack of a common theory of action. And on the other hand, an attitude of indifference and defeatism, a lack of belief in the possibility of holding the 18th Special Congress, prevailed.

REALITES: The UGET is reputed to be Leftist. Is this true?

Hamadi Elech: The slogan, since the very first steps were taken to put the UGET back on its feet, has called for dialogue with the students, not with political movements. The congress is open to all students, without regard to membership in any movement, whether or not independent. Everything is being done on the basis of the bylaws and the internal regulations of the UGET.

We do not take responsibility for those who exclude themselves of their own free will. We would remind those who say that the UGET includes only the Leftist students that the composition of the committee for preparation for the congress includes nationalists as well as progressive Islamists. Within the UGET, we do not have an attitude of exclusion. Participation in the elections and membership in the UGET are the sacred right of every student, in accordance with UGET bylaws and internal regulations, without regard for what movement a student is in or his position.

The supervision of the holding and the checking of the election results were assured by lawyers and representatives of the Tunisian League for the Rights of Man. The enemies of the UGET were unable to say that the elections were not democratic.

REALITES: How can you explain the lack of intervention by the authorities During the 18th Special Congress?

Youssef Lahmar: The answer involves two parts. First, intervention by the authorities would be the exception, and nonintervention should be the rule. The question should have been asked differently. Why would they have intervened? Moreover, the question of intervention is one for the authorities alone.

Hamadi Elech: We are making use of our right to organize. We demand the right to our premises, to the UGET headquarters, to our assets and our documents on the basis of respect for our independence.

REALITES: It is said that there were contacts between the RCD and the committee making preparations for the congress.

Mohsen Marzouk: There was no contact between the RCD and the committee preparing for the congress for the particular purpose of enrolling students in the UGET. To ask the party in power or any other party to participate in a congress without passing through the election process is inconceivable. Nothing happens outside the framework of the desires of the grassroots. The only arbiters are the students, and they are not present just as decoration.

REALITES: What is the position of the Executive Bureau on the issue of strikes and their duration?

Mohsen Marzouk: All trade unions use strikes as a weapon. The strike will not be used unless it becomes a mass weapon. It will not be a question of a bureaucratic decision. The strike weapon will not be used until after all other means have been exhausted. This is the last resort. The strike is a means and not an end in itself. We believe that it has lost its significance. However, some issues could lead to a strike—the deteriorating material status of the students, the revision of educational options. There will be committees at the federal bureau level to study the situation of each facility or institute, and to consult at the grassroots level.

The UGET has never opposed studies, provided all the necessary conditions can be established.

Nawfel Zaidi: The strike is a legal right of which we make responsible use.

REALITES: What is the position of the UGET on the politicization of the universities?

Mohsen Marzouk: According to the recommendations of the congress, the UGET cannot intervene in problems involving the politicization of the students. The organization is concerned with student members, and not with politicized students. Trade union participation, free of any concept of political membership, is too important.

For this reason, it is necessary that a democratic tradition be established, on the one hand, and that the people believe in the independence of the UGET, on the other.

Our motivating concepts will be democracy, nonviolence, and respect for all opinions.

Therefore no politicization or deflection of the UGET from its initial purpose—seeking the well-being of the student, whatever his affiliation—can be allowed.

Jawhar El Hazgui: No movement should be allowed to use the university, and through it the UGET, for political ends. This has occurred a number of times in the past. The Islamist example is the most striking.

Nawfel Zaidi: The student movement is not a union movement, but rather a body represented by a union. Therefore laws must be drafted which will protect the students. The students have acquired political maturity and are no longer blind followers of slogans.

REALITES: Will you not, however, be forced to adopt political positions?

Jawhar El Hazgui: We have political viewpoints. Who does not? But this remains the province of the political movements, which are fully represented at the university, and thus they cannot be prevented from engaging in politics. We will respect the opinions of all the movements, without necessarily taking sides with one or the other.

Nawfel Zaidi: All the issues are of interest to us, and we must have a position on certain political matters.

Samir Laabidi: One cannot be content with abstract answers, but must go farther and deeper into things. Currently, we are facing a number of major political novelties—the national pact, the party law, the press code—and we plan to make our position on these matters known.

But a number of issues merit more extensive study. Why has the university sector continued to be underrepresented for 17 years? Why not compare our university with others abroad? Should some unrestrained politicization be prevented? What is the true role of the university? What is the quality of the education being provided? Can an archaic and outdated system train competent cadres for the future? I would answer no, because I believe that Tunisia could in this way be headed straight toward a catastrophe comparable to the famine.

The problem is very complicated, and this congress represents but a transitional stage. The end product should be independence and proper representation.

Our desire is to get beyond the politicization stage. We are still political midgets.

And what about unemployment? It is a bomb which may explode any day. Our goal is to do everything so that our program will be as broad and as representative as possible, and so that it will cover all the specific problems.

What is the productive role of trade union work? How many neutral students have we won over? Why not establish leftist youth houses within the university? There are many subjects which time does not allow us to discuss in greater detail.

REALITES: What are the future union paths of the UGET? And why have they not been the basis for publicly stated positions?

Samir Laabidi: This is an extremely important question. This lack of a position is quite simply due to material limitations.

All of our communiques will come out in a book, as will, moreover, a report on everything which happened during the congress. We have already made contact with a publishing house.

Have no fear—you will know everything about the orientation of the UGET within a short time. Nothing will remain secret.

REALITES: Have you established a list of priorities for the various problems to be discussed?

Samir Laabidi: The top priority of all is to establish a specific position on educational reform. The right to study, freedom of action and speech within the university and the right to union representation are also important.

The dearth of jobs for cadres who have graduated from the university is an urgent issue.

The concept of the free university, which is new, represents a serious attack on the principle of popular and democratic education.

And finally, let us not forget perennial issues—scholarships, resources, student centers.

Nawfel Zaidi: We must become responsible and free ourselves of slogans. We are not opposed to reform, just certain aspects of it. In order to understand this issue more clearly, we must maintain contact with the union at the higher education level.

Among other major priorities is scholarships. They are truly laughable, and they fail to take the high cost of living into account. Then there is housing at the university center, which is only provided during the first 3 years. It is also necessary to remove the police from the university area. Above all, we must no longer be excluded from making decisions which affect our future.

Youssef Lahmar: I insist on adding one last explanation. The assignment of priorities to all of these problems depends on what working conditions we encounter.

Author Analyzes Ghannouchi Release, Relations With MTI

*45190069b Tunis REALITES in French
19-25 May 88 pp 5-7*

[Commentary by Bourguiba Ben Rejeb: "Ghannouchi, Islam and Politics"]

[Text] The release of Rached Ghannouchi just prior to the holidays removes a hindrance, and plainly makes it possible to launch a new phase and to move in the direction of clearing up the political atmosphere. The news nonetheless took everyone by surprise and raised a number of questions, because it brought the question of the MTI back into the center of discussion. There are those who think they sense that deals are being made, those who firmly believe that this is a decisive phase which should lead to the recognition of an MTI party, and the heavy silence of the state and Ghannouchi himself—all of these factors preventing a proper evaluation of the situation which has thus been created, for the time being.

In the home of R. Ghannouchi in a poor quarter of Ben Arous, there was room for nothing last Sunday other than the euphoria of the return. Until a late hour at night, successive groups made up basically of young people came to congratulate the head of the MTI and to tell him of their devotion, now that the test is over. He himself, somewhat thinner but in good health, fought fatigue in order to give priority to the rejoicing. Dressed in his white jellaba and freshly shaved, he preferred to find opportunities for happy comments. When asked to make a statement for the press, he chose to postpone this until a "more suitable moment. You know," he added, "one is unable to analyze things very well through prison bars."

Day of Release

It must be said that the day must have been a difficult one. The prisoner in his first floor cell in Borj Erroumi had been informed on Saturday, 14 May, that he had been pardoned and would be released at 8 am the next day, Sunday. He was even joined in his cell by a fellow prisoner, who was excessively weak, suffering above all from eye problems which had not been treated due to the lack of the proper equipment in the Tunisian hospitals. A doctor who was present confirmed this, recalling a comment by Ghannouchi, who said that "after all," the necessary equipment for this treatment could have been purchased "for even less than the price of a Mercedes."

The tone of the general atmosphere was more relaxed, with an occasional sprinkling of statements indicating certainty that Borj Erroumi, as such, hardly seems to have lost its edge. In the little room crowded with books and more people standing than seated, the sheik made the comment that after all, he had had to spend fewer hours in prison than had been decreed. In fact, his departure from Bizerte came about ahead of schedule. It

should be noted that at the Kram, in Tunis, meanwhile, gatherings were reported more or less everywhere. "The people want to express their joy. After all, they cannot be prevented from doing that," the head of the MTI was to comment.

Desire for Conciliation

And from then on it was a matter of that spontaneous energy and what people seem to regard as "the spontaneous generation, the mushrooms." The tea and almonds being served and the atmosphere of good humor did little to conceal the likelihood of a "serious" discussion to follow. In the end, it did not. The question which was left pending received no answer. Why just Rached Ghannouchi, and why now?

It is a certainty that the president's decision was motivated initially by a desire for conciliation. Becoming aware, probably, that the September trials in no way resolved the Islamic question, the president of the republic took a certain number of steps designed to establish the Arab-Muslim identity, and thus to gain control of a part of the Islamist debate—that part which seemed to him to assert this identity without distorting the resolutely modernist commitment of his political program. The fact nonetheless remains that this situation was the product of an unstable balance, and a strong dose of confidence, which could be justified as a stage but would not probably suffice as an end product, was needed.

In fact, it must not be forgotten that many Islamists supporting Islamism for its own sake saw themselves as being in the best position to give consistency to this faction. Clearly, this seemed obvious to those who came to celebrate the return of Rached Ghannouchi. But it is precisely this kind of analysis which could block the path leading to reconciliation.

Support Based on Principle

In fact, the problem now is to convert the try. This was visible first of all in the atmosphere following the release of the Islamist leader. Rached Ghannouchi was to say that he was told to go home and "tolerate no provocative presence." Moreover, all around Ghannouchi's home, the police were vigilant, but they were watching the large delegations which came one after another from a distance. The release of Ghannouchi today, and just Ghannouchi, left the way open for negotiation, while at the same time this gesture was meant to show firmness. Opening the store is not the same as declaring a store-wide sale.

Later, Ghannouchi himself was to confirm this attitude in a statement made to the TAP. Regarding his release "as a new step taken by President Ben Ali along the path toward achievement of the proposed change and national recovery," he expressed his "confidence" and "hope" of "seeing this new step lead to effective settlement of all the pending problems within the great

Tunisian family...under the impulse of great plans to conquer the future, to win the battle of development and to master destiny." And he added: "Our support is not temporary, but is based on principle, because we have the feeling that the steps taken to rehabilitate Islam, which had previously been a kind of pariah in its own country, are such that the 7 November project deserves to be supported, just as it deserves to be deepened, in order to make our country an example among its peers in the Arab and Muslim world."

A New Argument

These are propositions which were inconceivable less than a year ago, and they bear witness to the path covered and the attitudes of mind which might govern future negotiations. The fact nonetheless remains that they point basically in two directions.

1) The Islamist leader associates the Arab-Muslim identity with the democratic freedoms, and he makes a point of adding that the support being offered is not temporary. This statement allows him to eliminate the ambiguity which previously existed concerning the opprobrium to which the MTI, in its hegemonic aspect, was subjected. "The democratic freedoms" are translated as the right of each individual to organize, but also as his duty to accept differences.

Rached Ghannouchi is not raising the issue of an Islamist party, or has not done so as yet. Does this mean that he does not exclude the idea of a rally which would include, essentially and along with others, an Islamic faction? In such a case, nothing would any longer justify the imprisonment of the other Islamists, and we would be dealing with a coded argument in which the response to the release is an attitude receptive to possible future developments, of which the most immediate and essential might be effective participation in the drafting of a national pact. Only the future can tell if this represents a tactical choice or a total reorganization of the political landscape.

2) The head of the MTI confirmed the existence of a ground swell which has carried President Ben Ali forward since 7 November and basically altered the recruiting and the actions based on the reality of the crisis. To judge from the groups which came to express their joy at the return of the leader, the MTI has an essentially populist strategic base. It is therefore no accident that Rached Ghannouchi speaks today of the "great Tunisian family...under the impulse of great plans to conquer the future, to win the battle of development and to master destiny." The winning of the future and the development battle and the mastery of destiny—all are projects which qualitatively change the Islamist argument. But is it solely a change in the argument? On seeing the impressive number of bicycles outside Ghannouchi's home on Sunday evening, one could analyze the "clientele" of the MTI, which is made up, above all, of a middle class which has been struck full force by the crisis. Managing

the relaunching would have the result of calling the MTI, along with the other parties, to account in the realm of reality. It is true that words cannot be taken back. The fact nonetheless remains that reality is stubborn. Rached Ghannouchi made a point of saying on Sunday evening that with President Ben Ali, "rationality has replaced the irrationality of the former president." In addition to expressing his satisfaction, the head of the MTI was careful to note the new positions which demand careful plotting where the adaptation of the actions and the discussion is concerned. This is an issue which needs to be followed.

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UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

Al-'Utaybah Rejects OPEC Quota

44000139a Dubayy GULF NEWS in English
13 Jun 88 p 1

[Text] Vienna (Agencies)—The OPEC is set to extend its current oil production ceiling until the end of the year. UAE Minister for Petroleum and Mineral Resources Dr Mani' Sa'id al-'Utaybah, said yesterday.

The minister, speaking in a television interview just before leaving for consultations with President His Highness Shaykh Zayid Ibn-Sultan al-Nuhayyan on the second day of a biannual meeting of the OPEC countries, also said his OPEC quota was meaningless.

"The prevailing feeling is that this agreement due to expire will be extended until the organisation convenes in December," he said in an interview with Abu Dhabi television taped in Vienna and broadcast in the emirate.

Under the current production pact, which expires this month, 12 of the 13 OPEC members agreed to limit total production to 15.06 million barrels daily. Iraq refused to sign, demanding the same fixed quota as its Gulf war enemy Iran.

The Vienna talks have been dogged by political divisions and the atmosphere has been soured by friction between Saudi Arabia and Iran over the hostilities in the Gulf and future oil policy. Riyadh stunned the last meeting in April by severing diplomatic ties with Tehran.

A Saudi-led bloc wants higher output because of estimates that the West will use more oil in the coming months but a camp which includes Iran opposes this because of prevailing low prices on world markets.

Al-'Utaybah rejected the quota saying: "They have given us a quota of 948,000 barrels daily. For us this does not mean anything. This does not represent the official quota of the UAE. Everybody knows the extent of the UAE's sacrifice...."

"We are the second-largest petroleum country after Saudi Arabia in terms of reserves and production capacity...we want to affirm our adherence to OPEC resolutions apart from the quota."

The limits in the current agreement are designed to keep oil prices around \$18 a barrel, but prices have been well below that target for months. Al-'Utaybah said the group was planning to revive efforts to cooperate with countries outside the group.

"We are trying to arrange an OPEC/non-OPEC meeting before (the next OPEC meeting in) December," he said.

OPEC's last talks in April failed to agree [on] a response to an offer by six non-OPEC producers to cut exports by 5 per cent in May and June if OPEC reciprocated with a similar deal to boost prices.

The joint output cuts were effectively torpedoed by Saudi Arabia and other Gulf producers who objected to the size of the cut required from the cartel, leaving OPEC in disarray.

Instead of cuts, Saudi Arabia had asked for a rise in OPEC output at this meeting, delegates said. Oil analysts had been expecting an extension of the pact, with no production increase.

Oil analyst Mehdi Varzi of London stockbrokers Kleinworth Grieson, asked if an extension would boost oil prices which are at three-month lows because of oversupply and doubts about OPEC unity, said: "I question how much further prices can drop."

Asked about reports that former Indonesian Oil Minister Subroto would be appointed to the long-vacant post of secretary-general, Varzi said he was "desperately-needed expert to strengthen (OPEC's) world prestige. OPEC members trust him...."

"OPEC is rudderless at the moment and needs someone to guide it through a very difficult period. Certainly it's good news."

/9274

AFGHANISTAN

Khost Army Units Defend Borders

46000166a Kabul *THE KABUL TIMES* in English
8 Jun 88 p 2

[Text] "Setting up security posts on strategic points, the personnel of the border units have blocked the route of the enemy. And heavy losses were inflicted on the extremist elements when they assaulted our unit six times in the last Afghan year (ended March 19, 1988)," said brigadier Mirbachs, political head of the border unit of Khost division.

"Firing heavy guns from across the border, the enemy, who does not have the capability of direct fighting, wants to create panic among the people. They had resorted several times to this bestial action and as a result, innocent children and women were killed in this division," he continued.

"This action intensified the wrath and indignation of the people. By setting up a voluntary tribal battalion, they defended their life and residential areas along with the armed forces. Therefore we can confidently say that the armed forces of this division can defend independently the people and borders of the county", he added.

Answering another question, he said that, in addition to discharging their duties the personnel of the heroic unit constructed a dining room, a club with all amenities, summer baths for soldiers and a 25-bed hospital as a result of the voluntary work launched in the first two months of this Afghan year. They thus saved 6.7 million Afs.

"Our officers and soldiers also saved three million Afs by the voluntary works carried out last Afghan year by them in the field of agriculture.

This Afghan year they have cultivated three times more agricultural lands than last year.

Attention has been paid to the problems of the soldiers and there is no officer and soldier who didn't meet their commander or political head of their unit last Afghan year. There also is no officer or soldier who has deserted his job," he concluded. (BIA)

/12223

Over 100 Tribal Youth Studying in USSR, Number To Increase

46000166b Kabul *THE KABUL TIMES* in English
8 Jun 88 p 4

[Text] One hundred and twenty tribal youth were sent during the current Afghan year for studies to Soviet Union by the Ministry of Border and Tribal Affairs.

It is planned to increase the number to 300 persons by the end of the year.

Over 52 books on scientific, political and cultural subjects were published last year by the publicity department of the Ministry. (BIA)

/12223

PSFO Appeals for Release of Soviet Soldiers

46000166c Kabul *THE KABUL TIMES* in English
17 Jun 88 p 2

[Text] Following is the message of the Peace, Solidarity and Friendship Organization (PSFO) of the Republic of Afghanistan addressed to social circles in the Islamic Republic of Pakistan:

According to official reports, 311 soldiers of the limited Soviet military contingent in Afghanistan are registered as missing and it is reported that these Soviet soldiers have been arrested by Afghan opposition forces and transferred to Pakistan.

Public opinion and peace-loving circles of the world, including social circles of Afghanistan and the Soviet Union, are anxious about the fate of these youth.

The PSFO of Afghanistan representing all social circles of the country calls upon all social circles of Pakistan to exert pressure through various channels on the Pakistani government to ensure their urgent release and return to their own country and to adopt effective measures in this regard.

The PSFO of Afghanistan also urges that these soldiers should be humanely treated according to recognized international conventions.

The Organization fully expects that the Pak social circles can play an important role in the release of the soldiers and their return to their country as well as in strengthening the friendly and fraternal relations between our peoples and the cause of ensuring human rights.

/12223

Soviets To Provide Materials for Microrayon Expansion

46000164a Kabul *THE KABUL TIMES* in English
3 May 88 p 2

[Text] Construction materials valued at 6.5 million roubles will be made available from the long-term credit of the Soviet Union for the expansion of Microrayons.

A protocol on the supply of equipment has been signed between the institution of Stro-Export of Moscow and the executive committee of Kabul Municipality in Kabul city.

As per the protocol, the equipment will be delivered to the Afghan side in two and half years after the date of signing the protocol.

Adina Sangin Mayor of Kabul, and Alexander F. Petrov, Counsellor for Economic Affairs of the Soviet embassy in Kabul signed the protocol (BIA)

/12223

Aid Given to Peasants

46000164b Kabul THE KABUL TIMES in English
3 May 88 p 4

[Text] Seven hundred and fifty tons of improved wheat seeds and fertilizers were distributed to peasants of Wardak province last year by the national reconciliation commission of the province.

Government and Soviet relief valued at 800,000 Afs including flour, wheat, oil, clothes, footwear and blankets were distributed to repatriate families and opposition groups that joined the NR policy as well as other needy people of the province. 150,790 Afs were donated to the repatriates fund.

Voluntary work was organized on 12 occasions to build mosques, Schools, to repair roads and help peasants, report adds. (BIA)

/12223

Maimana City Life Improves

46000164c Kabul THE KABUL TIMES in English
12 Jun 88 p 4

[Text] Residential areas of Maimana city have expanded during the post-revolution years from one square kilometer to 15 square kilometers and the number of residential houses increased from 857 to 1850.

Also, 104 avenues and streets were newly built, thus bettering the life of inhabitants of that city.

A source of the executive committee of people's deputies of Maimana city reported that 522 plots of land in areas near the airport and 80 in other areas of the city were sold each at 21,400,000 Afs last year to families of revolution martyrs, the disabled and those soldiers who had served more than five years. An amount of over 14 million and 300 thousand Afs was earned through rent of shops, inns and apartments.

It is planned to distribute 200 residential land plots in the current Afghan year in Tawakali Khana and Tatar Khana areas of Maimana city to the deserving, the source added.

Also, three roads each 6,680 meters long with a width of 10 to 15 meters were repaired and macadamized in Maimana city by the personnel of the executive committee with the close cooperation of Maimana citizens, thus saving over 3,523,000 Afs.

The deep wells of the military commissariat and Maimana city airport were also reactivated last year with the installation of two water pumps, tackling problems of more than 50 percent of Maimana residents of drinking water, the source added. (BIA)

/12223

Land Distributed in Mazar-i-Sharif

46000164d Kabul THE KABUL TIMES in English
17 Jun 88 p 4

[Text] Mazir-i-Sharif, June 15 (BIA)—One hundred and fifty plots of land in the Nowbahar project were distributed yesterday in Mazar-i-Sharif city to families of martyrs, disabled, repatriates and other deserving families.

According to a spokesman, up to now plots have been distributed to over 3,000 deserving persons in Mazar-i-Sharif city. The process continues.

It is planned to distribute plots of land for construction of residential houses to one thousand persons during the current Afghan year in various areas of Mazar-i-Sharif city.

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INDIA

Expectations From Gorbachev November Visit Told

46001540 Calcutta THE TELEGRAPH in English
14 Jun 88 p 1

[Article by K. K. Sharma]

[Text] New Delhi, June 13—The Soviet leader, Mr Mikhail Gorbachev, is to visit India again in November, his second visit in two years. At least two major agreements are to be signed while he is here to further promote Indo-Soviet economic relations.

The first is an agreement on Soviet assistance to establish two giant nuclear power stations in south India, each of which will be of the size of 1,000 MW. The second is an agreement for a new line of credit of 300 million roubles for the private sector so that Indian businessmen can import Soviet machinery.

Both agreements are highly significant since they will take cooperation between the two countries to new areas. The Soviet offer to build nuclear power projects has

finally been accepted despite opposition by the Atomic Energy Commission, which feels India has the ability to establish its own nuclear generation plants.

The Soviet offer for building nuclear power stations is at least 10 years old and was repeated by Mr Gorbachev when he visited India two years ago. Because of objections by the Atomic Energy Commission, the offer was stalled particularly when the Chernobyl disaster cast doubts about the safety of Soviet-designed plants.

The original offer by the Soviet Union was for a single nuclear power station of 500 MW. Far from being rejected, as seemed likely until recently, the government has now decided to give the Soviet Union contracts for two plants, each of which will be twice this size. Both will be located at sites to feed to southern power grid.

A number of factors have gone into the decision to accept the Soviet offer, including the desire of the two countries to accelerate economic cooperation and boost their bilateral trade two-and-a-half times to reach a two-way turnover of Rs 10,000 crores by 1992. The Soviet plants will also help achieve the target of setting up 10,000 MW nuclear generation capacity by 2000 AD.

But the clinching factors were the terms offered by the Soviets to set up the nuclear plants and their agreement not to press for safeguards on all Indian nuclear installations as required under international agreements. The plants are to be set up on a turnkey basis, but substantial Indian components will be used.

The financing terms are so favourable—including long repayment periods and low interest rates—that the Soviets will effectively bear half the cost of the plants. This is important at a time when India is facing a serious shortage of funds for development projects.

The other major agreement to be signed during Mr Gorbachev's visit is for a 300-million rouble line of credit to be routed through the Industrial Development Bank of India (IDBI) for the private sector. The Soviet Union has recently opened its economy to private businessmen and is keen also that Indian industrialists buy as much as possible from Soviet engineering undertakings. This line of credit will make this easier.

/9274

Protocol on Soviet Aid in Energy Field Described
46001541 Bombay *THE TIMES OF INDIA* in English
31 May 88 p 9

[Text] New Delhi, May 30—The Soviet Union has agreed to assist India in getting up an aggregate generating capacity of 6,000 MW.

Of this, 4,500 MW will be commissioned by March 1995 and the balance in the ninth plan period. Work on projects which would yield benefits in the eighth plan period will commence by March 1990.

This is the highlight of the protocol signed in Moscow by the power secretary, Mr M. M. Kohli, and the Soviet deputy minister for power and electrification, Mr A. P. Poddubsky, at the conclusion of the ninth meeting of the Indo-Soviet working group in power.

It has been agreed that soon after any project is identified for Indo-Soviet cooperation, discussions would be arranged with Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited for determining the possible scope of supply and services from this organisation.

Indian and Soviet power organisations will also interact with each other to promote co-operation in the areas of designing, engineering and research of hydroelectric projects.

The two delegations also reviewed the status of implementation of the ongoing joint power projects, including the Tehri hydro-power complex and the superthermal power stations at Vindhyachal (6 x 210 MW) in Madhya Pradesh and Kahalgaon (4 x 210 MW) in Bihar.

Second and third units of 210 MW each of the Vindhyachal projects are scheduled for completion this year. The first unit has already been commissioned. It was agreed that all necessary measures would be taken by both sides to fully commission the project by the seventh plan-end. The stage II (2 x 500 MW) of this power project is likely to be taken up with super critical parameters.

Experts of both the sides have already discussed various technical issues relating to 500 MW sets with these parameters for meeting the operational and design requirements of the Indian side. The first unit at Kahalgaon is to be commissioned in 1990-91.

On the Tehri hydro-power complex, both sides noted with satisfaction that Indian and Soviet experts had finalised the design concept and criteria for the Rockfill dam and spill way. It was also noted that the Soviet experts had agreed with the development plans for protecting the environment in the project area.

/9274

Procedure To Expedite Japanese Investment Announced

46001542 Bombay *THE TIMES OF INDIA* in English
31 May 88 p 16

[Text] Tokyo, May 30 (UNI)—India today announced the appointment of a "fast channel" to expedite Japanese private investment and do away with bureaucratic hurdles.

The announcement comes within a month of the Prime Minister, Mr Rajiv Gandhi's Tokyo visit during which Japan had sought urgent action to remove hurdles in the process of inducement of Japanese private investment.

The formation of a special inter-ministerial group composed of three ministries, was conveyed to a committee of the Japanese Chamber of Commerce and Industry by the industry minister Mr J. Vengala Rao, here today.

The group will look into Japanese collaboration proposals and problems and take speedy actions for their clearance, the minister told the Indo-Japan joint business council, formed by the chambers of the two countries, which met today.

He said the committee would "interact with the Japanese investors and organisations as well as with the Japanese embassy."

"In regard to the phased manufacturing programme," he said, "we are examining closely the existing procedures with a view of making its application more flexible with regards to specific sectors of industry."

Mr Rao said "regulatory controls are being minimised and administrative procedures are being simplified in order to give much greater freedom and flexibility to business enterprises to establish and expand their activities. The process does take time but our determination to complete it is very strong."

Echoing the recent Indian frustration, the minister said the Japanese private investment and "Technology licensing" agreement in India was one-half percent of Japanese investments in Asia and about one tenth of its total investments.

"Our government would like to ensure that India becomes equally attractive" for Japanese investment, he said.

The minister will meet the foreign minister and Mr Tamura, minister of international trade and industry tomorrow. Mr Rao arrived here with ten top Indian businessmen soon after Mr Gandhi's Tokyo visit.

Mr Rao also sought Japanese investment to produce "export goods" for reexport. "Such an approach has relevance in the context of the strong Yen and the cost advantage which industries in India enjoy, especially if they are export oriented."

Talks Held on Border Problems

Satisfactory Outcome

46001543 Madras *THE HINDU* in English
1 Jun 88 p 9

[Text] New Delhi, May 31—The two-day talks between India and Bangladesh on trans-border problems concluded here today. The talks were held between the Bangladesh delegation led by Maj Gen Sofi Ahmad Chaudhry, Director-General, Bangladesh Rifles and the Indian delegation led by Mr H. P. Bhatnagar, the Director-General, Border Security Force. Addressing the meeting, Mr Bhatnagar said it was the responsibility of the BDR and the BSF to protect the people living in the border areas from trans-border crime and prevent smuggling.

The issue of the Chakma refugees also figured prominently in the talks but an official release issued here after the meeting had little to say on the matter. Both sides have agreed that steps should be taken to check the growing incidence of smuggling and trans-border crime. Maj Gen Chaudhry invited Mr Bhatnagar to visit Dhaka next year and later called on the Home Minister, Mr Buta Singh, the Minister of State for Home Affairs, Mr P. Chidambaram and the Home Secretary, Mr C. G. Somiah.

In the recent past, as a consequence of his political troubles at home President Ershad had accused India of aiding and abetting the Shanti Bahini (the Chakma guerilla force) and violating the SAARC spirit. Earlier this month, however, he wrote a personal letter to the Prime Minister, Mr Rajiv Gandhi, reiterating his desire to take back the 'genuine Bangladeshi' Chakmas.

Conciliatory tone: Considering the conciliatory tone of the letter and the fact that the Chakma issue is a major stumbling block in Indo-Bangla relations, there was a high-level review meeting on the Chakma issue presided over by the Prime Minister himself. The problem facing New Delhi is to convince the Chakma refugees on whom some Rs 8 crores have already been spent that the Bangladesh Government was creating the proper conditions for their return. Bangladesh has claimed that it has taken measures to promote employment, restoring the alienated jobs of the tribals, and preventing plains people settling in the hill tracts, but this has failed to instil confidence in the refugees.

The Chakma problem has been the root cause of coolness between New Delhi and Dhaka and has prevented the routine official-level talks for resolving some of the outstanding bilateral issues. The work of the Joint Committee of Experts on sharing Ganga waters, Secretary-level talks on trade and other such issues have been put in cold storage. The talks between the two border police chiefs thus may be a small first step in unfreezing New Delhi-Dhaka ties.

Gandhi Review, Ershad Letter

46001543 Calcutta *THE STATESMAN* in English
28 May 88 p 1

[Article by Manash Ghosh]

[Excerpt] New Delhi, May 26—The plight of 45,000 Bangladesh refugees now living in five camps in Tripura was the focus of Mr Rajiv Gandhi's 70-minute-long review of India-Bangladesh relations held here on Tuesday. Senior officials of the External Affairs Ministry, including the Indian High Commissioner to Dhaka, Mr I. S. Chadha, attended the meeting.

Although periodic review of India's relations with Bangladesh is very much a normal exercise, providing pointers to New Delhi's thinking and attitude towards Dhaka, what gave urgency to the review meeting was the controversial Chakma issue which of late has been responsible for the deterioration of India's relation with Bangladesh. Almost the entire gamut of the Chakma refugee issue was discussed at the meeting and unhappiness was expressed at Bangladesh not doing enough to take back the refugees soon. It was reportedly felt at the meeting that the creation of right the atmosphere for discussing various bilateral issues and matters was contingent upon the resolution of the Chakma problem. [sentence as published]

What necessitated the review meeting was the personal letter that president Ershad recently wrote to Mr Rajiv Gandhi reiterating his desire to take back the "genuine Bangladeshi Chakma refugees" living in camps in Tripura. Unlike his recent public accusations against India (once he said India was violating the SSARC spirit by aiding and abetting the Shanti Bahini's activities in the Chittagong Hill Tracts) the tenor of his letter was said to be "quite conciliatory". President Ershad regretted the fact that there was a lack of appreciation or even recognition of steps taken by him and his Government to improve the situation in the Chittagong Hill tracts so that the Chakma refugees could return home. He is to have even agreed to the Indian suggestions that a delegation of Bangladeshi tribal chiefs visit Tripura camps in the coming weeks along with the Bangladesh High Commissioner in Delhi, Mr Farooq Ahmed Chowdhury, to persuade the refugees to return home. India has already cleared the proposed visit of the Bangladeshi delegation the date of which is yet to be indicated by Dhaka.

Although President Ershad has set no date for their return, his acceptance of the Indian suggestion, first made by Mr Narsimha Rao, in October 1986 and subsequently by Mr Narayan Dutta Tiwari and the Indian Foreign Secretary, Mr K. P. S. Menon, is seen by the South Block as Bangladesh's belated recognition of the Indian standpoint that the Chakma refugees would not return unless a sense of confidence was instilled in them by the Bangladesh Government by adopting a host of "meaningful measures".

Apart from being a serious drain on India's resources (more than Rs 8 crores have already been spent on the refugees) India had made it known that it does not want to be saddled with the spill-over effects of Bangladesh's Chakma problem and then be accused of using this as a pressurepoint against Bangladesh. External Affairs Ministry officials say that the Prime Minister twice in recent months had publicly given vent to his annoyance by saying that despite President Ershad's personal assurance to him to take back the refugees nothing concrete had been done by him to honour his pledge.

Although Bangladesh has indicated to India that it has taken several measures—like reserving jobs contracts for the tribals, restoring land fraudulently taken away from them by the plainmen, stopping new settlements of plainmen from coming in the hill tracts—Delhi is not sure to what extent these would be able to inspire confidence among the refugees. After all, the refugees refused to leave the camps last January when their repatriation was due to start.

The Bangladesh standpoint has been that whenever congenial conditions have been created for the return of the refugees the outlawed Shanti Bahini has stepped in by committing large-scale massacres in the Hill Tracts. India's reply has been that Shanti Bahini is Bangladesh's problem and Dhaka should find ways to effectively deal with it. But Dhaka has accused India of providing sanctuary to Shanti Bahini which has been stoutly denied by India.

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Possible Need for Grain Imports Told, Deplored

More Imports Considered

46001552 Calcutta *THE TELEGRAPH* in English 19
Jun 88 p 8

[Article by K. K. Sharma]

[Text] New Delhi, June 8—The unusually low procurement of grain from the last rabi harvest by the government agencies so far has led to serious concern in the ministry of food and civil supplies about the availability of wheat and rice if the monsoon does not live up to expectations.

As a result, serious thinking is being done about stepping up the level of foodgrains imports.

Unexpectedly, procurement has been satisfactory this year only in the troubled state of Punjab and government agencies have bought nearly five million tonnes of wheat from here so far. This is attributed to the fact that private traders have hesitated to enter the market in Punjab because of terrorist violence and the difficulties of storing grain in conditions of political instability.

Since Punjab has had an unusually good rabi crop, government agencies have been able to make substantial purchases to replenish the country's food stocks. This has undoubtedly eased the scarcity that would otherwise have resulted.

However, procurement has been unusually low in other wheat-growing states like Haryana and Uttar Pradesh. This is mainly because private traders have been active and have offered higher prices than the government agencies which are buying at the rate of Rs 173 per quintal fixed by the Agricultural Prices Commission. Procurement in Haryana and Uttar Pradesh is around half the level of last year.

In view of this performance, it is expected that wheat procurement for the Central government stocks will not be above eight million tonnes from the rabi crop. This seriously endangers the stock position which has been depleted by releases to meet the needs of the public distribution system and the drought-relief programme.

The public distribution system and the drought-relief scheme require around two million tonnes a month. The result is that by the end of April, when the current procurement drive began, the stocks have fallen to the dangerous level of around seven million tonnes. This is well below the 17-million-tonne level considered necessary for buffer stock purposes and to keep the public distribution system going. The government aims at keeping a least 10 million tonnes as a buffer and another seven million tonnes to operate the public distribution system.

Since this level will not be possible to maintain solely from rabi procurement and stocks from this year's kharif, even if it comes up to expectations, will start coming in late this year, further imports are being seriously considered.

So far, one million tonnes have been purchased at subsidised rates from the USA. The first grain imports to be made for several years. In addition, around 500,000 tonnes of pulses and another 500,000 tonnes of rice from Thailand have been contracted for. But these will help the stock position only marginally.

It is expected that further wheat imports will be made from the USA, which has once again offered cheap foodgrain because of silent diplomatic moves and also because of its huge internal surplus. A final decision will be taken after watching the performance of the current monsoon since it will be crucial for the agriculture sector and for the economy as a whole

'Leak' of Decision Costly

46001552 New Delhi PATRIOT in English
11 Jun 88 p 1

[Article by M. K. Kaul]

[Text] As much as 40 per cent of the cost of India's wheat imports would be sliced away by the shipping companies by way of freight charges. And most of these companies are foreign.

India would have paid comparatively lesser freight charges if the news of the importing of huge wheat stocks by the country to tide over crisis situation created by the successive three years' drought had not got leaked out by 'design' or bureaucratic bungling to the foreign press prematurely, sources say.

And the result is: India would be paying a whopping sum of Rs 60 crore as shipping charges for the import of one million tonnes of wheat from the U.S. against around Rs 146 crore as the wheat price.

India is importing one million tonnes of wheat from the U.S. at a cost of \$103 per tonne, which comes to a little over RS 1,545 at the prevailing rate of exchange. Against this, shipping charges come to around \$40 or Rs600 per tonne.

Around October-November last Lloyd's List International which is a British daily catering to shipping, banking, finance and other such interests, carried a story that India would be importing some nine million tonnes of wheat to replenish its fast dwindling buffer stocks of foodgrains.

Ironically, the news item appeared at a time when the Government of India was denouncing from house tops any talk of foodgrain imports, obviously enough not to give any kind of boost to speculative foreign markets.

Denials of the Government notwithstanding, the piece of news, sources say, was enough for the foreign liners as special kind of drydock ships are used for transportation of the grains.

And as a result when the officials of the ship chartering directorate of the Union Surface Transport Ministry moved out for negotiations to charter the ships around March-April last, it was found that the freights were being pushed up. When the actual contracting for the vessels was done to move foodgrains cargo there were not many a vessel available at a rate prevailing before the publication of the news item.

Thus, so far they have been able to contact seven ships—five foreign and two Indians—to transport one million tonnes of wheat between May and September.

What is worrying the officials is that since the Government has announced that it would be importing 500,000 tonnes of rice from Thailand and there are also reports that another proposal to import of 2.5 million tonnes of wheat is in the offing, the shipping charges may be further pushed up.

Since February, the officials say, the shipping industry, which has been facing recession for quite some years now, is slowly finding things looking up. It is said to be another reason that is proving unfavorable for India's wheat imports.

Another thing which has added to India's agony is the lopsided and short-sighted policy pursued by the policy makers and the indigenous industry too.

During the last few years, India's overall shipping tonnage has been on the decline. Against over six million GRT—the term in which shipping tonnage in India has historically been maintained—in April 1985, it had come down to a little over 5 million GRT in January 1988. It means that tonnage had come down by nearly one million GRT within less than three years.

Against the international practice, sources say, India scrapped a number of ships without any replacement during the recession. It is generally the practice the world over the ship liners are encouraged to buy new vessels during the recession when they go really "dirt cheap". For instance, it is said, China built up its merchant navy fleet during the recession and now as the industry was slowly picking up it would reap the results.

Also, against the wishes of the Surface Transport Ministry, the decision of the Government to replace institutions like Shipping Development Fund Committee, which was supposed to help the shipping industry through liberal loans to tide over the fiscal crisis on

account of recession, with 'tight fist' financial institutions like Shipping and Credit Investment Company of India, which is controlled by the Banking Department of the Finance Ministry.

Some months ago, it is said an Indian shipping company sought permission for the purchase of old ships to help increase the tonnage.

Through the Surface Transport Ministry granted the permission, the vessels could not be purchased because of shortage of funds, as the new shipping finance institution would weigh the proposal under strict banking terms.

The interesting aspect of the whole thing is that the subsidy on foodgrains would have to be enhanced if the Centre wants to continue to sell wheat at Rs 2.14 a kilogram through fair price shops as it is selling now. The price of per kilogram of wheat would come to around Rs 2.40 a kg if one adds up the expenditures like shipping and inland freight and commission to the fair price shop owners.

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